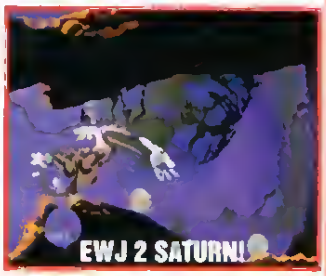
PLAYSTATION • SATURN • 32X • ULTRA 64 • NEO GEO • 3DO • JAGUAR • SNES • VIRTUAL BOY • GENESIS

GAMEFAN

NEXT GENERATION VIDEO GAME MAGAZINE

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 1









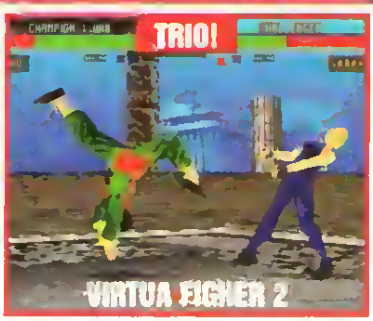
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GEX

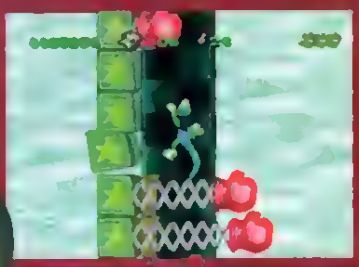
Get ready for one serious See-Food Cocktail.

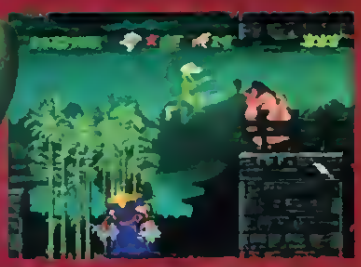
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NOVEMBER, 1994

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Perhaps the biggest event in the history of gaming, Nintendo's official launch of the Ultra-64 and subsequent re-emergence as the force in gaming, is featured on pages 130 & 131 of this month's GameFan. We went so far as to completely re-shuffle our printing schedule, changing the on-sale date of both the December and January issues to assure you get all the official Ultra launch information as quickly as humanly possible given the channels a publication must go through on its way to the marketplace. As I write this I am bidding farewell to Nick and Casey as they make their way to LAX with Taka, for a journey we've been waiting to take for three years. They will (literally) land in Japan, sleep, awaken to the Shoshinkai, raid the show floor and press room, and just make Fed-Ex. Two days from now with GF already on press we'll tear open the Fed-Ex box, lay out pages 130-131, drop in their text file, and courier the last form to our printer. Is it worth all the hubbub to get you this information a week or two earlier than normal? I guess I'll know that in about 36 hours, when we get the big call from Nick and Casey from the show floor.

Besides the U-64 info, this issue is full of promising next-gen software, the Fourth Annual Megawards and all the exclusives you've come to expect from GF. So I won't keep you any longer. Enjoy!





VICIOUS WHOOPS!



RUGGED ROAD CONDITIONS INCLUDING ICE AND MUD!



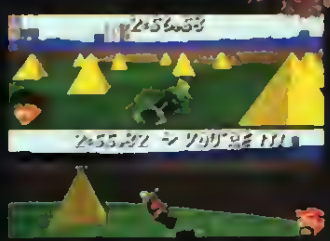
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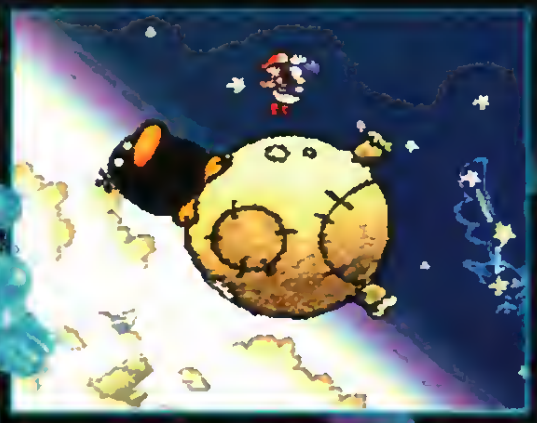
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CONTENTS



THE 4th ANNUAL GF MEGAWARDS
With 32-bit on the way in, and 16 on the way out it was slim pickin's. But overall this may turn out to be a record year for innovative design & overall quality.
PAGE 104



ULTRA 64
Just like they (and we) said it would be... unbelievable!
PAGE 130



PRIMAL RAGE
PAGE 30



SKELETON WARRIORS
PAGE 54

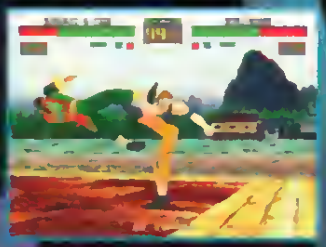


COVER STORY

After gazing at pages 130 & 131 millions of people will finally understand what we've been delaying since the N-64's delay back in May.



EWJ 2 SATURN
PAGE 56



VF2
PAGE 58



SEGA RALLY
PAGE 62



JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE
PAGE 70

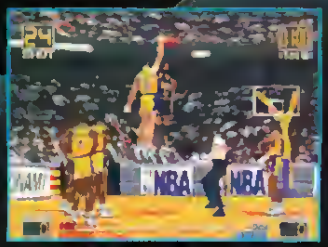
GAMEFAN original art by:



TERRY WOLFINGER



HANG ON GP '95
PAGE 93



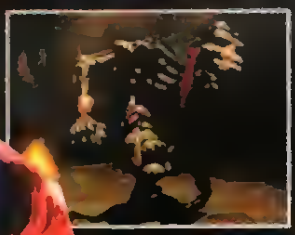
NBA IN THE ZONE
PAGE 116

EDITORIAL ZONE 4
MOST WANTED/TOP TEN 12
VIEWPOINT 16
HOCUS POCUS 24
POSTMEISTER 26
PLAYSTATION NATION 30
SATURN SECTOR 54
3DO ZONE 62
GEN 32 92
GAMEFAN SPORTS 107
PLANET SNES 100
SEGA SECTOR 101
E FAN AN INTERVIEW WITH DANZIG 132
JAPAN NOW 122
OTHER STUFF 140

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TOP TEN MOST WANTED

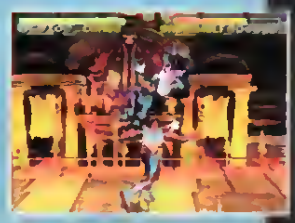
READERS' TOP TEN

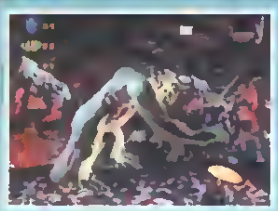
1. Mortal Kombat 3 - PS
2. Battle Arena Toshinden - Saturn
3. Daytona USA - Saturn
4. Mortal Kombat 3 - SNES
5. Panzer Dragoon - Saturn
6. Killer Instinct - SNES
7. Chrono Trigger - SNES
8. Street Fighter Alpha - Arcade
9. Yoshi's Island - SNES
10. Street Fighter: The Movie - PS



READERS' MOST WANTED

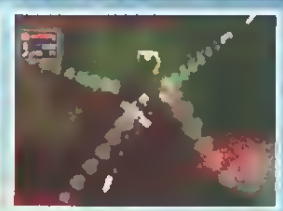
1. Killer Instinct 2 - U64
2. Loaded - PS
3. DKC2 - SNES
4. Virtua Fighter 2 - Saturn
5. Mario RPG - SNES
6. X-Men Children Of The Atom - Saturn
7. Resident Evil - PS
8. Tekken 2 - PS
9. Final Fantasy 7 - U64
10. Sega Rally - Saturn













GF EDITORS' TOP TEN

1. Toshinden 2 (PS)
2. Skeleton Warriors (Saturn)
3. Loaded (PS)
4. Warhawk (PS)
5. Wipeout (PS)



6. Hermie Hopperhead (PS)
7. X-Men (Saturn)
8. DKC 2 (SNES)
9. Sega Rally (Saturn)
10. EWJ 2 (Saturn)

1. Toshinden 2 (PS)
2. Dark Stalkers (PS)
3. X-Men (Saturn)
4. Loaded (PS)
5. Gargoyles (Genesis)



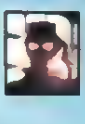
6. Virtua Fighter 2 (Saturn)
7. SF Alpha (Arcade)
8. Soul Edge (Arcade)
9. Sega Rally (Saturn)
10. Warhawk (PS)

1. Doom (PS)
2. Sega Rally (Saturn)
3. DKC 2 (SNES)
4. Killer Instinct (SNES)
5. SF Alpha (PS)



6. Warhawk (PS)
7. Wipeout (PS)
8. Tekken 2 (Arcade)
9. Skeleton Warriors (Saturn)
10. D's (Saturn)

1. Virtua Fighter 2 (Saturn)
2. Tanchi Sozo (SF)
3. Samurai Spirits 3 (Neo Geo)
4. Tactics Ogre (SF)
5. Skeleton Warriors (Saturn)



6. Resident Evil (PS)
7. Sega Rally (Saturn)
8. Doom (PS)
9. Pulstar (Neo CD)
10. Yoshi's Island (SNES)

1. Doom (PS)
2. SF Alpha (Arcade)
3. Warhawk (PS)
4. Virtua On (Arcade)
5. Toshinden 2 (PS)



6. Marval Super Heroes (Arcade)
7. Super Mario RPG (SNES)
8. Yoshi's Island (SNES)
9. DKC 2 (SNES)
10. Skeleton Warriors (Saturn)

1. Soul Edge (PS/Arcade)
2. New Japan Pro Wrestling (PS)
3. SF Alpha (PS)
4. Warhawk (PS)
5. Pulstar (Neo Geo)



6. Layer Section (Saturn)
7. Fire Pro Gaiden (Saturn)
8. Takkan 2 (PS/Arcade)
9. Yoshi's Island (SNES)
10. Ridge Racer Revolution (PS)

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Drawing is limited to One (1) entry per person per month. Drawings will be held on the 21st of each month. The three (3) winners will be notified by mail and listed on this page. For a complete list of rules and regulations write GameFan Top Ten with self-addressed, stamped envelope

Congratulations

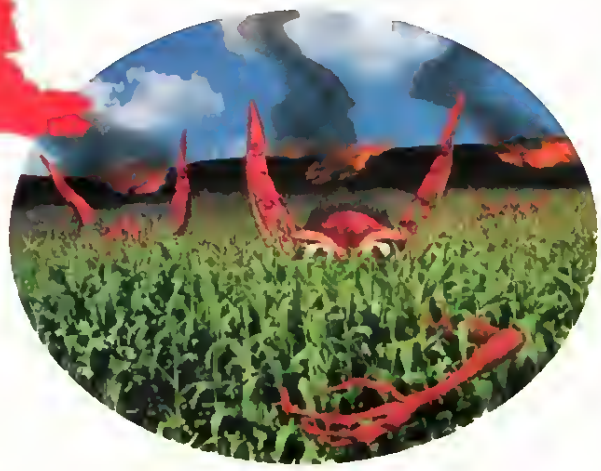
to last month's winners:

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Second Prize:
Ronald Spencer, Southfield, MI

Third Prize:
Stephen Habisreitinger, Honghto LA

Build it.
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Forget about fields of dreams. With The Horde, it's more like little slaughter-house on the prairie. See, we've injected arcade-style, belly-slitting fun into that sleepy-ass commune you call home. And between digging death pits and hiring archers, enjoy some serious, gut-popping swordplay. 'Cause man, these neighbors really bite!



(Game Pro 3DO™ review)



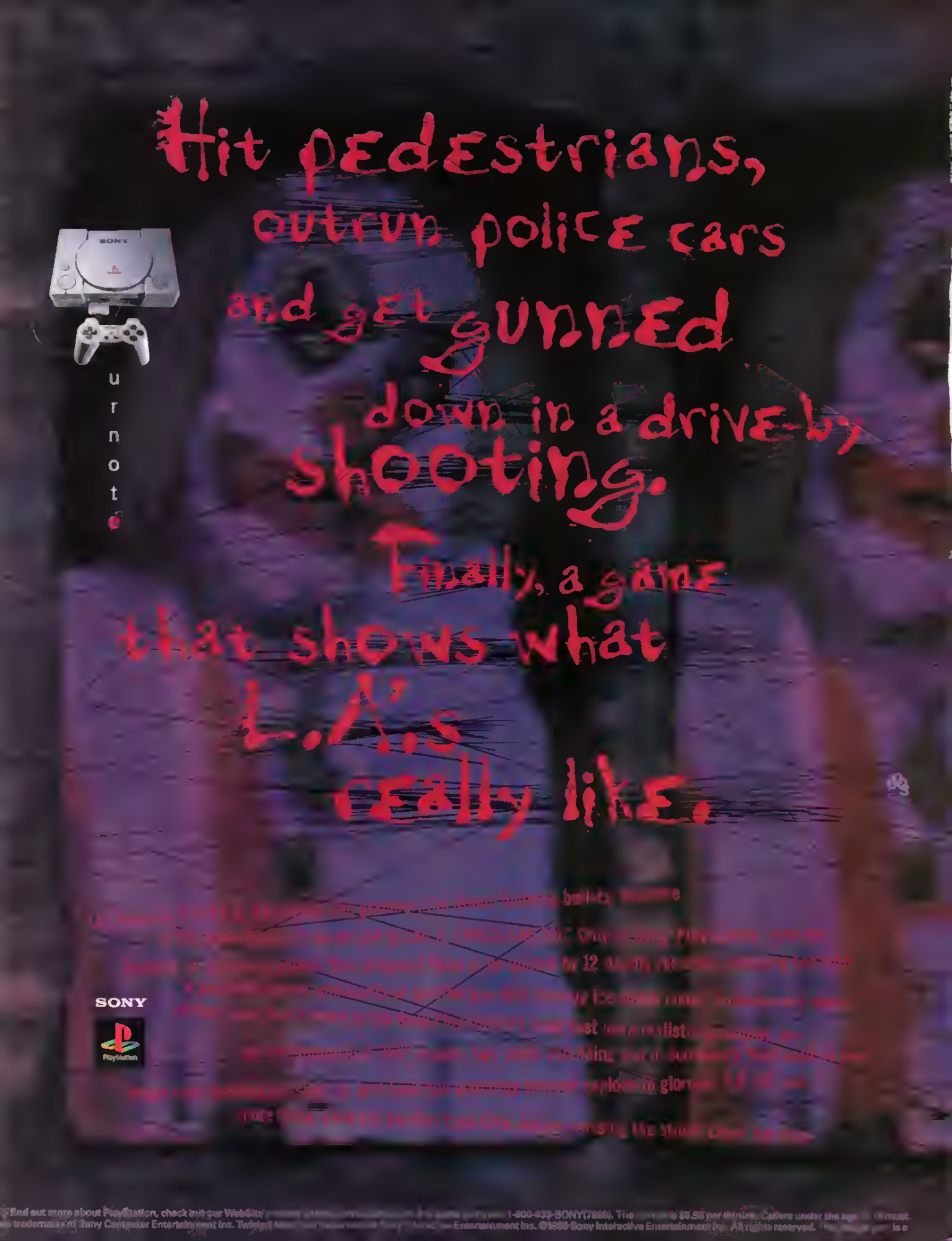
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AGES 13 AND UP

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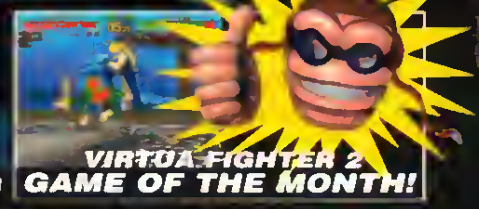




VIEWPOINT

Legend
Graphics
Control
Play mechanics
Music
Originality







LOADED
PLAYSTATION
INTERPLAY • CD
ACTION/ADV.

One of my favorite games of '95, *Loaded* marks a new chapter in the evolving gaming world. Looking past the violent theme and mind bending graphics, complete with light sourcing from the heavens, you'll find an amazingly playable game that sucks you into its dark world similar to the first time you played *Doom*. Pure addiction with a side of blazing sound, on the fly zoom, and ca,ca,crazy freaks, and I want my Mommal An absolute pre-requisite for the PS.

G 10 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 **98**

Loaded is no experience no video gamer should miss. At first it looks like a 32-bit whacked out *Smash TV*, but it's really more of a maze/exploration game. Each level has many intricate paths, hidden keys, and loads of items. Patience is an absolute must. The characters are gnarly, the music blasts your friggin' lobes (techno and rock together, what more could you want!), and the lighting fx put everything else to shame. I personally felt the gameplay style was a bit repetitive and there could have been more interesting enemy patterns (level bosses would also have been nice), but otherwise *Loaded*'s a first-gen masterpiece.

G 10 C 8 P 8 M 10 O 10 **93**

Games are starting to get crazy. A year ago, you had told me I'd be playing a shooting game with a line-scrolling 3-D-ish *Smash TV* viewpoint, ground shaking explosions, blood stained hallways and beautifully rendered visuals at home for under $60, I would've thought you were nuts. Yet here is *Loaded* in all its gut spilling PlayStation splendor. The game is a bit on the hard side and some of the characters are anywhere near as effective as Momma, but that still doesn't take away from the fact that *Loaded* is a great game. Buy it.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 8 **90**



DOOM
PLAYSTATION
WILLIAMS • CD
3D ACTION/ADV.

I cannot stress enough how much this version annihilates all versions to date. *Doom: Custom PlayStation Edition* has hyper-cool *Super Metroid*-ish moody music, amazing visual effects, seamless scaling, more levels than any version, perfect control... I could go on forever. The game is so good, even the creator of *Doom* himself says this is the best version. I liked this game so much, I spent my hard earned cash on a copy of PS *Doom* without hesitation. I recommend that you do so as well.

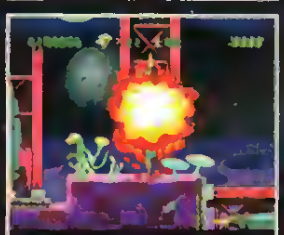
G 8 C 9 P 8 M 10 O 8 **95**

I didn't think WMS Industries would give me a reason to pull out my N/C once again for yet another *Doom*, but boy was I wrong. This is the best video game version of *Doom* imaginable. The only thing separating this from the PC is the resolution limitations of standard TV against an SVGA monitor. Gorgeous transparency fx, perfect controls, all the levels ever, and the Link feature (FINALLY) make this game a hall-of-famer. The only options missing: an ability to import new WADS (levels), and the ability to link four PS's instead of just two.

G 10 C 8 P 10 M 8 O 8 **96**

It's amazing that *Doom*, really the first game in its own genre, is still so far and away the best. This is definitely the best corridor action game, and this is an incredible version. Though the resolution is down a bit, you get over 50 levels of strategic action, a level of speed rarely attainable on the computer version, and a very cool new atmospheric soundtrack. I've played *Doom* a million times before on many different formats, but I'll never get tired of such a well made game, and such a well done version.

G 10 C 10 P 10 M 10 O 10 **96**



GEX
PLAYSTATION
CRYSTAL DYN. • CD
ACTION PLATFORM

If I were Crystal Dynamics I'd take one of my biggest and best titles from the 3DO, make it all shiny on the PS hardware and uh, hey, speak of the devil and the devil... turns into a gecko that talks! Yes, CD, the busiest company in all of gaming besides Acclaim has a little medicine for all you new PS owners thirsting for some action/platform power. The PS *Gex* has blissful FMV, looks a whole lot better overall, and plays fast and fun. A sequel that taxes the PS hardware must follow!

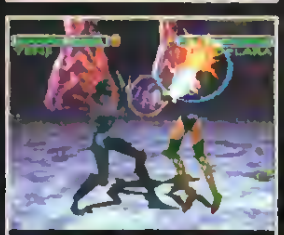
G 8 C 8 P 7 M 8 O 7 **80**

On the 3DO, *Gex* was special. It was a standout 2-D action game surrounded by a sea of "Multimedia Software" and 3-D crap. The PlayStation *Gex* is the best version yet, but it's just not as special as it was before. This game has faster scrolling, better special effects and more precise control than the 3DO version. Unfortunately, *Gex* now swims in much rougher waters, with a shark called *Rayman* to feed on its prey.

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 8 **80**

When I heard *Gex* was coming for the other 32-bitters, I hoped they would be new versions that would take advantage of their formats' advanced capabilities. Clearly, the PlayStation *Gex* fixes all of the 3DO version's frailness and speed problems, but it's still just the same game, a good action platform title. I'd really rather have *Rayman*, but *Gex* is a quality platformer nevertheless.

G 7 C 7 P 8 M 7 O 7 **79**



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VIC TOKAI • CD
FIGHTING

Criticom is big on storyline and has a brilliant CG intro, but when it comes to gameplay the tank is empty. The control scheme is worse than *Primal*'s and the characters look and feel awkward and cumbersome during gameplay. Adding insult to insult to injury, the voice samples are beyond comic relief (way beyond), combos are non-existent, and the polygons break up so bad during the 'you win' screens that entire pieces dissapear. A whole lotta' pain.

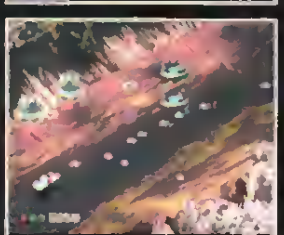
G 8 C 3 P 5 M 5 O 5 **50**

Criticom would warrant a purchase if you bought games only for their comedic value. Compared to other games on the system - *Tekken*, *Toshinden*, and especially the upcoming *Soul Edge* and *Toshinden 2* - it truly seems like a joke. Plaid-fast backgrounds, stuttery, breakup-laden characters, glaringly bad AI and zero gameplay destroy this game. But hey... it has a nice intro!

G 5 C 3 P 4 M 7 O 5 **40**

Wow! I didn't know such a horrendous level of game design ineptitude was possible! *Criticom* is the worst fighting game since *Rise of the Robots*. The texture-mapped poly characters aren't bad, the backgrounds are nothing short of gorgeous, and the music's surprisingly enjoyable, but the sloppy, ill-conceived, WISH-I-was-*Tekken*-or-even-*Primal-Rage* gameplay has to be put to sleep. This game is as playable as a violin with one string.

G 8 C 4 P 2 M 5 O 5 **43**



VIEWPOINT
PLAYSTATION
EA • CD
SHOOTING

Viewpoint gets a lot from its new rendered graphics. In fact, it looks almost too good to be true... probably because it is. Payment for the visual bliss comes in the form of intermittent frame rate slowmo. Additionally, the music (which was the best thing about *Viewpoint*) has been changed. The new tunes, though at times painful, are for the most part good, but why the change? Finally, the difficulty is still cranked up to nearly impossible (*Viewpoint*'s only real drawback). Still, this is a great, and visually blazing iso-shooter die hard shooter fans should not miss.

G 10 C 8 P 5 M 8 O 7 **79**

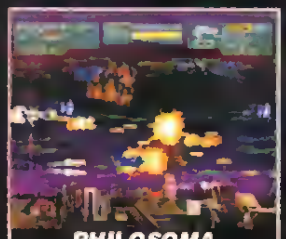
At first glance the PlayStation version of Viewpoint seems like a fan of the original Neo game's dream come true: the same shooter with polished 1995 graphics. Upon close inspection, one notices that the music has been horribly changed and the frame rate slows to a skidding crawl quite often. It's still one of the only games of its kind and worth a purchase, but I'll stick with the Neo version.

G 10 C 8 P 7 M 5 O 8 **80**

Bringing back a great, little seen shooter with incredible new rendered graphics and a new CD soundtrack was an excellent idea... But Electronic Arts failed to correct the original's play mechanics and difficulty flaws, and actually ended up compounding them with some endlessly sprite jerkiness and the removal of the slowdown that was absolutely necessary to defeat some of the bosses. The result is a game that looks great, but just isn't any fun past level 3.

G 10 C 5 P 5 M 8 O 7 **74**


Flamin' Yawn trashed my house.
Psycrow stole my lady.
I've got a backpack full of snott.
This ain't gonna be no picnic.
EARTHWORM JIM 2
http://www.playmatestoys.com
GENESIS
PC CD-ROM
SEGA



PHILOSOMA
PLAYSTATION
SONY • CD
SHOOTING

To play *Philosoma* is to be painfully teased. *Philosoma* is so good yet so short, it'll drive you mad. I waited two years for this game and finished it in two sittings. Setting the deficiency in challenge aside, this game has everything going for it: the CG FMV is easily the best to date, the story is awesome and the levels themselves are beautifully rendered. SCE should just go with this basic formula and make a sequel with more of everything!

G 10 C 9 P 9 M 7 O 8 **85**

Philosoma has recieved mixed reviews and I can't understand why. This shooter is filled with not only cinemas from the heavens but six, count 'em six engines! How 'bout top view, side view, under view, 3-D line scrolling view, front view, and rear view... all for you! In addition, the music is excellent and the rendered graphics are gorgeous. Maybe it's not for everybody, but *Philosoma* is for me!

G 9 C 9 P 10 M 9 O 9 **90**

As you'd expect from the PlayStation's first shooter, *Philosoma* is a visually stunning game, with incredible sprites, backgrounds, and FMV quality. The huge variety of play modes was a cool idea, as well. Unfortunately, even of the play modes struck me as particularly fun or well made, and many became very repetitive, with monotonous (though impressive) backgrounds and only a few enemies. The weapons just plain sucked, and your ship was an awkwardly huge target. Still, a good first effort and a nice showcase game.

G 9 C 7 P 8 M 9 O 7 **84**



ZOOP
PLAYSTATION
VIACOM • CD
PUZZLE

OK, so Miss Demeanor went a little nuts. Hey, she lives for this stuff! Honestly, *Zoop* is an addicting, strategic, puzzle gamers dream come true, with enough shape shifting madness to make the dog stare at the TV screen. I still rank *Puyo Puyo* slightly higher but respect the designers for achieving something so original that actually works. Good stuff!

G 7 C 9 P 9 M 7 O 9 **85**

Being a puzzle game fanatic, I was quite curious about *Zoop* considering all of the pre-release hype. A mere two trials later, I was hooked. Shapes still danced to my brain after I was forced to stop playing. This game has great music, loads of fun, cool power ups, and an incredible strategic element. It is an easy game to play, but thankfully it's tough to master. If it had a competitive mode, *Zoop* would be the perfect puzzle game. The ads may have annoyed you, but do yourself a favor and play *Zoop* at least once.

G 9 C 9 P 9 M 9 O 9 **96**

How hard would it be if someone stuck you in a room and said "Make a puzzle game that is totally new and innovative, that anyone can easily pick up, but only the gurus of puzzling will master."? I'd look for the nearest window! But hey, those wacky folks at Viacom have done just that and for this I salute them. Good show!

G 9 C 9 P 9 M 7 O 9 **82**



JUPITER STRIKE
PLAYSTATION
ACCLAIM • CD
SHOOTING

Taito needs to take a break. For a 32-bit shooter, *Jupiter Strike* falls pretty short. The gameplay is enjoyable and the level and bosses are cool, but there's a definite void in terms of "give me a reason why I should play this." The two channel PCM music hurts, and the in-game graphics are just beyond 16-bit. Considering Taito's capabilities, this game is a big disappointment. *Jupiter Strike* isn't terrible, but one tends to tire of it after an hour or so.

G 7 C 7 P 9 M 2 O 7 **70**

Acclaim made the wrong decision to bringing Taito's shooter o' pain to America. In one fell swoop, *Jupiter Strike* manages to: A) approach the ear's pain tolerance with the most putrid music ever heard on the PlayStation, B) anger the gamer with "damn this is hard" gameplay balance and limited continues, and C) induce laughter with cheesy explosions, grossly overdone FMV and sloppy play control. The polygon graphics are decent and the pop-up has been kept to a minimum, but even that is not enough to save this sinking ship. I'll pass.

G 7 C 5 P 7 M 2 O 9 **67**

Jupiter Strike tries quite hard to be *Panzer Dragoon* but falls flat on its back. The graphics aren't too bad, the control is slow but not heinous, and the music.... possibly the worst next-gen tunes ever. It's not an if this game is painfully bad, but it's just an middle-of-the-road. And it's quite difficult. If you must have a PlayStation shooter, go with *Philosoma*.

G 7 C 5 P 5 M 1 O 5 **60**



WARHAWK
PLAYSTATION
SONY INT. • CD
SHOOTING/SIM.

Warhawk... the shocker of the year! Wow, wow, and wow again. Where oh where did these programmers find this power on their first PS game??? OK, first blow the pyramid, snatch the can and then, while cruising through the canyon in stage 2, take a lil' dip. Now 'bout that reflection and beauty splash! Now rise up and hit the barrier. What is that effect? Just amazing! From here every op is a joy to behold and play. A word to the wise... play zoomed out at all times, tailor your control, and skip the FMV.

G 10 C 8 P 10 M 8 O 10 **98**

First the bad. Uhhh.... well.... *Warhawk* is a bit on the short side with just 6 missions and uhh.....uhh..... hmmm. Now for the good. Some of the best special effects in the history of video games, 3-D environments from Nirvana, a soundtrack to make John Williams proud, control perfection, and zero pop-up. The game is so good, it made me wonder if I was indeed worthy of its power. The Silicon Graphics programmers roots are in multi-million dollar US military sims and it shows. If this is the PlayStation, what the hell is the Ultra 64 gonna be like.

G 10 C 9 P 10 M 8 O 10 **98**

The game with the best 3-D and special effects yet seen on the PlayStation is also one of the few games developed for the PS in America! *Warhawk* is the only combat simulation game that I could possibly love more than *Ace Combat*. The reflections, texture mapping and light sourcing (lightning!) have to be seen to be believed. On top of that, it plays as good as it looks. Try to get the full effect out of this game by enjoying it on a high-end audio/video setup.

G 9 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 10 **97**



VIRTUA COP
SAURN
SEGA • CD
ARCADE SHOOTING

Sega's rockin' this month! Sega's arcade conversions are really picking up. *Virtua Cop* in the arcades was the first light-gun game that I'd enjoyed since *Duck Hunt* on the NES. The game itself is extremely involving, constantly producing new enemies to shoot, before they shoot you. The control is odd with the Saturn pad, but it still works for me. The true way to enjoy VC is to play it with the light- gun. It's exactly like the arcade version, minus the cabinet.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 9 O 8 **92**

Once again, a Sega conversion as close to the coin-op as is possible on Saturn. It's true the game is extremely short and can be beaten in 20 minutes, but... you get to KILL people. You feel ultra-powerful wielding a gun and just blowing everyone (and everything - you can take out much of the scenery as well) away.... Pure testosterone-pumping mindless fun. If you buy VC, buy the gun. It is bright orange, unlike the super-slick black Japanese model, but the game simply cannot be played without it.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 **90**

3 near-perfect translations in one month.... Sega is definitely making up for lost time in a big way. *Virtua Cop* is a lot of fun, and the arcade version is well represented in this translation. The only drawbacks are its simplistic and repetitive nature, and the exorbitant cost of the game + 2 guns. If you can afford it, though, this is the ultimate stress reliever.

G 8 C 8 P 9 M 7 O 8 **89**



SEGA RALLY
SATURN
SEGA • CD
RACING

What a translation! *Rally* shouldn't even be possible on the Saturn. AM3 has taken a Model 2 game and almost flawlessly brought it over to the Saturn. They've even added a 2 player mode that in my opinion, makes *Rally* the best 2 player racing game ever. The only drawback being diversity with only three tracks to race upons, the amazing 3-D driving and superb gameplay more than make up for it. As much as I love the PS, they don't have anything that can touch *Rally*... yet.

G 9 C 10 P 10 M 10 O 9 **99**

Sega's kind of scary. Here, again, is an unbelievably close translation of the arcade game. This 3-D should not be possible on Saturn. Imagine the arcade game at half the resolution and frame rate.... add a touch of pixellage and that's the Saturn version. This is a 180° turnaround from *Daytona* - don't let that game make you think this isn't power. And you have to buy *Rally* anyway, 'cause you haven't lived until you hear "Game Over Yeah!"

G 10 C 9 P 9 M 9 O 9 **95**

Yet another shock from Sega.... *Rally* is the most ambitious arcade translation I've seen in a long time, and Sega came very close to perfection. The graphics are very good, and easily erase the bitter taste of *Daytona*'s miserable translation. The music's pretty cool, and this is the one of very few racing games to actually provide a 2-player mode, which worked out very well. I really liked the game's feel and challenge, but with only a few options and 3 tracks, there just isn't much you can do. Still, an alarming game that definitely belongs in any racing fan's permanent collection.

G 10 C 9 P 9 M 9 O 7 **94**



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HIGH VELOCITY
SATURN
ATLUS • CD
RACING



HV is one of the best driving/racing games for the Saturn to date. While the concept isn't really ground breaking, the game's 3-D engine and amazing playability really capture you, maybe not to the extent of *Rally*, but that'x not what HV is about. This is more a competitive touring game and therefore a viable additional purchase. Re-draw is nearly non-existent, putting the graphics at the arcade level and there's even a 4-player mode! I played HV for hours and never tired. The soundtrack more a little thin but otherwise, I love it!

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 7 **85**



I like this game. Although it's not up to the high standards at a *Daytona*, *Ridge Racer*, or *Sega Rally*, *High Velocity* has many positive features to its credit. The feel of the cars is very realistic and it's adjustable to boot. Graphically, HV provides not only a good sense of speed but the texture mapping is pretty good and pop-up doesn't exist in this game. There is a little bit of slowdown in the split-screen multi player mode but even then, it's very playable. Well done, Atlus.

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 8 **86**



If I had played this game before *Rally*, as most of its Japanese owners would have, I'm sure I would have been very impressed by its nearly pop-up free-3-D and well-designed tracks. Unfortunately, it doesn't fare very well in *Rally's* shadow. The variety of cars is cool, but the play mechanics are pretty generic and the game lacks the breathtaking vistas and well drawn objects of other modern racing games. A solid game, but I don't see too much point to owning more than 1 racing game, and it's definitely *Rally* all the way.

G 7 C 7 P 8 M 6 O 4 **79**



MYSTARIA
SATURN
SEGA • CD
STRATEGY/RPG



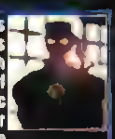
While more a pure strategy game than an RPG, Mysteria does the strategy thing well. In fact, maybe to well. This game is literally 99% strategic fighting. If you like strategic fighting you should be in heaven, because the graphics and control scheme are top-notch, the amount of attacks... staggering!! and the length, forever. Personally a little to much of a good thing for my taste, but a great game nevertheless. Now flayearth...

G 8 C 8 P 9 M 9 O 8 **80**



its so good to see an improved american version of a Japanese RPG. The storyline is coherent and entertaining, the 3D is smoother and faster, the game battles are challanging and balanced plus the music is insane(that means good.) What'x even better is that the game even made it over to these shores. Hopefully SOA will continue to stimulate the older, sophisticated players that tend to gravitate towards RPG's and have the means to buy a Saturn..... Hello... McFly.....

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 9 O 8 **89**



While I would have enjoyed this game a lot more about 6 months ago, I heartily commend Sega both for translating it and fixing some of its flaws. Though the strategic parts get fairly tiresome after 10 or 15 hours, *Mystaria* does boast a long quest with a good storyline and some impressive graphics and music. It's not an epic to get excited about, but if you own a Saturn and enjoy RPG's, odds are you'll have a lot of fun with *Mystaria*. It's an *Rayearth*, but a good game.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 7 **87**



THUNDERSTRIKE 2
SATURN
US GOLD • CD
SHOOTING/SIM.



Core's first Saturn game is a winner! While the redraw is suspect, everything else about Thunderstrike 2 is excellent. The ops are diverse and can be conquered in numerous ways, the texture mapping (especially on the enemies) is outstanding, the sound effects are totally realistic and the control scheme is masterful. TS2 could have been a tad longer but overall, a great chopper sim. for the first generation Saturn crop.

G 8 C 8 P 9 M 7 O 7 **85**



TS2 is by far, the best military flight sim for the Saturn to date. While that might not be saying much, it still doesn't take anything away from this game. The missions are challenging and well thought out and the music is very cool. The graphics are a mixture of much good and a little bad. The actual sprites themselves(trees, towers, tanks, terrain, ect.) look fantastic but there is massive pop-up on large polygon objects. Still, TS2 is the ultimative Saturn military flight sim by a wide margin.

G 8 C 7 P 8 M 8 O 7 **86**



Thunderstrike 2 is a well done game. While there's definitely some redraw problems, especially when turning around, the luscious backgrounds and textures give the game a very high class feel. The control is solid (although I wish you could go a bit faster), and the music definitely has its moments. The way each mission had a different objective was cool, but it was kind of lame the way that no matter whether it was escort, in recovery, or whatever, the key was always just to destroy all the red dots. Still, this is a strong game that absolutely slaughters *Blackfire*, its only competition in the genre.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 7 **86**



VIRTUA FIGHTER 2
SATURN
SEGA • CD
FIGHTING



Allow me to open this privileged VF with this: I declare *Virtua Fighter 2* to be the best Sega game to years, if not ever. The jump in quality between the original VF and the sequel is a quantum leap beyond anything I could have expected. All the moves, off the gameplay and all but a tiny bit of the incredible graphic punch is reproduced astoundingly well on Sega's monster console. If I didn't already own one, this game would be more than reason enough for me to buy a Saturn. Perfection!

G 10 C 10 P 10 M 8 O 8 **98**



The first thought I had upon viewing VF2 for the Saturn was "This is as close to the arcade as you could possibly get at home." Upon further examination, however, it seems obvious that this game should not be possible at home - 60 frames per second, 704x480 resolution and the best motion-capture and polygon characters in any home fighter. AM2 has gone above and beyond the system's theoretical limits and brought us power that we do not deserve. Trust me, you will NOT be disappointed by VF2. It's easily the best 32-bit game so far.

G 10 C 8 P 10 M 8 O 8 **98**



I just can't believe I'm playing this... Some of the backgrounds are a bit disappointing, but outside of that, the Saturn version is shockingly close to the coin-op. This level of resolution and speed is totally unprecedented, and the sprites look great. The arranged soundtrack is cool, all of the new modes add a lot of replay value, and I'm certainly never one to complain about CG intros. VF2 is an incredible translation of an incredible game, and one that will keep me very busy for the next few months.

G 10 C 8 P 10 M 8 O 8 **98**



PO'ed
3DO
ANY CHANNEL • CD
3D ACTION/ADV.



PO'ed's a great but weird game. Great is the gameplay, filled with cavernous levels for you to explore and explode, multiple weapons and a Dood, Jamax Bond, jet pack. Weird are the walkin' butt dudes that shoot bung first, along with the rest of the "I'm not sure what that is" enemies. This is far and away the most impressive 3DO 3-D to date and has enough play value for even the most demanding adventure fan. *Doom* on wings maybe? Hey, I'm still not sure what it is. But I like it.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 8 **85**



Now this is a big suprise. How ironic is it that the same game I (wrongly) predicted would be "bilewere" could in fact, turn out to be my favorite 3DO game of them all. *PO'ed* is a well designed, insanely addictive and suprisingly enjoyable game. The music rocks, the challenge is high and the 3-D is slicker than Fable's forehead. I'm even looking forward to a sequel. Go figure...

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 8 **90**



Any Channel, the development team responsible for *PO'ed*, have taken the *Doom* concept to the next level. For a 3DO game, *PO'ed*'s concept, great playability, and depth, are amazing. The 3-D environments are massive. So big, in fact, that levels can take up to an hour to complete! If you buy only one 3DO game this year, *PO'ed* should be the one. Of course no one only buys just one game but wasn't that a cool quote?

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 **92**



NBA JAM
JAGUAR
ATARI • 24 MEG CART.
ARCADE SPORTS



Please hear me. I never want to play or review *NBA Jam* again. I've played the coin op, SNES *Jam*, SNES *TE*, Genesis *Jam*, Genesis *TE*, 32X *TE*, GG *TE*, GB *TE*, PS *TE*, Saturn *TE*, and now the Jag *TE*. This version's just fine. If you must compare, compare it to the 32x version. The PS version remains and always will remain king o' the *Jam*, the Saturn number two, and this and the 32x numbers 3. Gamers who own a Jag only, and have never played *NBA Jam*, should be ecstatic, all two of you.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 **75**



ATTENTION ALL READERS, ATTENTION ALL READERS, THE ATARI JAGUAR GETS ANOTHER GOOD GAME. What'x this? A game worth playing on the Jag? That makes it a total at 3 good games this year... WOW! Seriously though, *NBA JAM: TE* plays very well, has satisfying graphics, decent voice and is a good arcade to home translation overall. Too bad this game is even better on the Saturn, PlayStation, & SNES. Buy it if you must, 'cause only the lord in heaven knows when or if another good Jag game will come along again.

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 7 **80**



OK, the Jag is a 64 bit system, right? So then why isn't this the best version of *NBA Jam*? The graphics are on par with the SNES, as is everything else except the music, which isn't as good. In fact, the only thing that looks next-gen is the title screen. If compared to *White Men Can't Jump* (the only other Jag b-ball game), this of course destroys it, so it is a must own for Jag players, but I was expecting much more from Atari's first big license.

G 7 C 8 P 7 M 8 O 8 **78**



LOOKS CAN KILL.

Get on the winning team or get out of the way. Jim Lee's WildC.A.T.S® are slashing their way onto the screen of your Super Nintendo Entertainment System.® You take control of Spartan,™ Maul™ or Warblade™ in their ultimate mission against the evil Helspont and his Daemanites. Work together and the WildC.A.T.S blast through eleven worlds of tense battle and unfathomable danger. Don't, and it won't be just "looks" that kill you.

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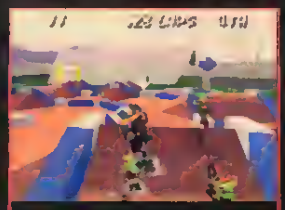
NELVANA

Beam Software

Playmates Interactive Entertainment, Inc.

16200

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Playmates Interactive Entertainment



DIRT TRAX FX
SNES
ACCLAIM • FX CART.
MX/RACING

I thought *Dirt Trax FX* was long gone. Then all of a sudden, bingo!, the Acclaim machine squirts out another cool SNES game. This time it's all the FX type which I personally really look forward to. With 22 courses, a two player option, and smooth poly's my SNES is good to go for another spin. I wonder if it'll ever part with it? Probably not. MX and racing fans alike should find plenty to like about DTFX, especially if the SNES is still your sole game system. I bet you're lovin' pg. 130...

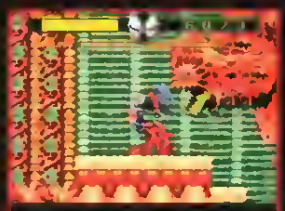
G 7 C 6 P 8 M 7 O 8 — **80**

I'm actually kind of shocked. Isn't this the FX game that I've seen at the Electro Brain booth for about 4 CES's and one E3? Sure doesn't seem like it. A year ago this game looked like a chunky mess but now it ranks among the best of the SNES racing crop. Smooth 3-D, blazin' MX action, cool music, and surprisingly addictive gameplay, finally, from the folks at Acclaim.

G 8 C 9 P 8 M 7 O 8 — **88**

Viva Acclaim! Once again they've placed a homeless game. This one's been long in coming but was worth the wait. *Dirt Trax FX* (yes the one you've been gazing at for over a year), is in my opinion, one of, if not the, best FX game so far. The movement is twice as fluid as *Stunt Race*, and the control's twice as good. Most importantly however, the riders look cool for being polygonal as they wheelie, endo, and slam big ol' berm shots. DTFX gets the hole shot on all other current MX games.

G 8 C 8 P 7 M 7 O 9 — **85**



SPAWN
SNES
ACCLAIM • 24MEG CART.
ACTION/ADV.

As a big *Spawn* fan (I mean, I own all the action figures, garage kits, comics, and spin-off's big), I can honestly say this game is kinda' hurtin'. Japanese programming and *Spawn* just don't mix. *Spawn* would've been better served by Probe. The biggest problem is the difficulty, but the often confusing control and weird jumping don't help either. In *Spawn*'s defense the art is pretty good but the animation on everything but *Spawn* is pretty bad. An average game. *Spawn* deserves better.

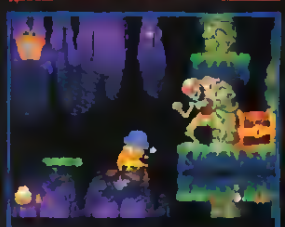
G 7 C 6 P 8 M 7 O 8 — **70**

It has become harder and harder to take seriously any and all games that are artificially hard (you know, instead of being difficult by ingenious level design and/or item placement, it cheats you with enemies and bosses that take 150 million hits to kill). *Spawn* has fantastic music, well drawn graphics, gallons of different moves and actions, but the experience as a whole leaves a rancid taste in your mouth because of its annoying "artificial difficulty." *Spawn*: a good game that should've been even better. Shame.

G 7 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 — **79**

Spawn is an impressive SNES game, featuring one of the coolest comic book characters in recent memory. Bright spots in *Spawn* include the music, much of the visuals, and the abundant play mechanics. The major down fall in *Spawn* is the difficulty. This may be the hardest game since *Battletoads*, no joke. Every level is impressive graphically, the art is drawn very well, and although many of the enemies repeat, it really didn't bother me given the diverse locales. *Spawn* could've been great, but, given the minor flaws, will have to settle for good.

G 8 C 7 P 7 M 10 O 8 — **80**



GARFIELD
GENESIS
DISNEY • 16MEG CART.
ACTION/ADV.

Much to my surprise, *Garfield* turns out to be one of the year's better Genesis action games. While I detest the character in all his Saturday morning, Sunday funnies, and greeting card glory, he does come across well as a video game character. The gameplay is challenging, if not a tad floaty, the animation and art are very good and the level design is quite meticulous. Definitely one of the year's best non-violent (fun for the whole family) games.

G 8 C 7 P 7 M 7 O 8 — **79**

Jim Davis meets video games! Despite reservations that some may have about *Garfield* being a children's title, it's actually a very solid platformer that should appeal to a broad audience. *Garfield* has impressive production values and plays better than a lot of the platformers out there today. The graphics, which feature deep line-scrolls, are great, and the sound fx are good Genesis quality. This along with the bizarre story and unique play mechanics make it a game worth owning.

G 8 C 7 P 8 M 7 O 8 — **82**

I'm not the biggest fan of games that are based on american cartoons but *Garfield* is genuinely better than the norm. The graphics range from "basic foreground but beautiful line scrolling backgrounds" to "wow, look at the *Ranger-X* type action going on in this bonus stage." The fat cat himself is well animated and has the perfect comic book look. The control is solid but the music is forgettable. So... I guess if cartoon games are your thing, knock yourself out. I prefer something more serious, but this game wasn't made for me.

G 8 C 7 P 8 M 7 O 7 — **80**



GARGOYLES
GENESIS
SEGA • 16MEG CART.
ACTION/ADV.

Disneys first to house Genesis game is a hit. *Gargoyles* is a great Genesis game. Of course the art and animation are fantastic, but this game goes much further, with diverse gameplay, dark locales reminiscent of *Demon's Crest*, and quality sound. Most of all, *Gargoyles* is long, very challenging, and extremely fun to play. Much of the time finding the safest route is half the fun. Disney's got some big talent. My PlayStation is waiting...

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 — **89**

Wow, where did Disney obtain this power? Although the big "D" has more than enough money and power to create good games, I'm still suprised at how well they did their first time out. Not only does *Gargoyles* feature great music, artwork and animation (a no-brainer, considering their history) the game also plays very well, has play mechanics galore and the levels are very well layed out. *Gargoyles* seems as though it came from a company with a long history of games, yet it's Disney's first... amazing!

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 — **90**

I've learned something over the last two years. If it says Disney on the box there's big quality inside. *Gargoyles* is one of the best Genesis games I've ever had the pleasure of playing. Goliath controls perfectly, the game is very non-linear, and the whole adventure has a cool, dark theme to it, something fresh for a Disney game. I've got nothing bad to say about this one. Feed this cart to your Genesis immediately.

G 9 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 — **90**



BEYOND THE BEYOND
PLAYSTATION(JPN)
SONY • CD
RPG

First off, let me say how happy I am BTB is coming here. Thank you, Sony. The story is actually pretty cool, featuring political struggles and character conflict. That said here's what BTB needs: More distance between fights! You literally can travel only about six to twelve inches on the map between fights. An option to lessen the fights once you're leveled up would be nice. Tapping the button during fights is a bit peculiar too. The fights themselves are glorious, as is the overhead map mode with its cool perspective. A very good RPG that could actually be better when it comes out here. I hope this lasts.

G 8 C 8 P 7 M 7 O 8 — **80**

Beyond the Beyond has many strong points - a beautiful overhead map, the best battles (at least visually) to any RPG, cool puzzle dungeons and... well... I guess that's about it. Hyper 16-bit town scenes, poorly composed music and a reasonably lame story far outweigh *Beyond*'s good points. Since it is the only RPG on the PS it's worth buying, but this wouldn't cut it in the 16-bit arena.

G 8 C 7 P 7 M 8 O 7 — **79**

Yes, yes, finally a real RPG for a 32-bit system. Not a strategy RPG, not a 3-D RPG, just a real town-overhead map-dungeon old-fashioned RPG. But... um... well... I guess now that I think about it, I wanted something traditional, but not something this incredibly generic! Battle graphics are very good and the overhead map is fairly cool, but *Beyond the Beyond* is just repetitive and dull. I liked the characters, and the story has some merit, but it's just town-overhead map-dungeon, again and again, interspersed with way too many battles. *Arc the Lad* was short, but at least it was something different. Hopefully, *Genesis Saikedan* will strike that perfect balance between maintaining proud RPG traditions and attempting something new.

G 8 C 5 P 7 M 8 O 8 — **77**



HANG ON GP '95
SATURN(JPN)
SOJ • CO
GP RACING

If GP '95 were'nt so quirky in the control dept. Sega would have a boxlitch hit on their hands. GP '95 has great 3D, impressive texture mapping, and ripplin' SOJ tunes. The GP style scrape the knee form is totally intact and two camera angles put you on or behind the bike. The only fly in the ointment is the hyper sensitive control. Hold right or left too long and it's hello wall. Sega Sports oughta' tune this beast up a bit' and bring it out over here.

G 8 C 7 P 7 M 8 O 7 — **79**

I live for Formula 1 and Motorcycle Grand Prix racing games. As far as bike games go, Hang On GP '95 is in a class by itself. Sega has brought smooth 3D texture mapped polygon sophistication and their trademark playability to the motorsport. What's more, GP 95 also brings a refreshing air of slickness and class to this genre that was sorely missing. Great look, great sounds, great feel...Hang On GP '95 has it all setting a new precedence for all other GP motorcycle game to aspire to.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 — **88**

Rev up the GP racer and hit the texture mapped speedor of SOJ's latest racer, *Hang On GP '95*. Bring your patience though, this game's controls are oh, so, reactive. You'll need to master the brakes and cornering etiquette but once that's out of the way you've got yourself one cooool racer. Good tunes, lots of depth and a true GP circuit make this an obvious future Sega Sports game.

G 8 C 7 P 8 M 7 O 8 — **80**

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VIRTUA COP™



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The Stalker's HOCUS POCUS



Travel With Thy Controller In Hand To A Land Where Cheaters Prosper...



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Third Prize!
Win a GameFan T-Shirt

Send in your codes... good, bad, or ugly. We'll look em' over and choose one grand prize winner each month. Codes cannot come from a previously published US magazine. Winners will be drawn each month and displayed here in Hocus Pocus, the only place where cheaters prosper. (Current subscribers who win a sub. will receive a one year extension.)

* Any video game featured in our "Viewpoint" section

CONGRATULATIONS!

To this month's winners:

First Prize:

SANGHOON RHEE, MARTIN, TN

Second Prize:

Jon Leneway, New Baltimore, MI

Third Prize:

Robert D. Munda, Freeport, IL

SEND YOUR CARDS AND LETTERS TO:
Hocus Pocus
5137 Clareton Dr. Suite 210
Agoura Hills, CA 91301



***Mortal Kombat 3 / PS - Smoke Kode Clerification.**

The code publishad last month to access Smoke in the PS version of MK3 was the correct code [0-1-0-6-9-6], but I forgot to mantion that it must ba dona on tha Ultimate Kombat Kode screen! Access this scraan by rotating the directionat pad clockwise whila the game is on the copyright scraan. My apologias for the mix-up. - The Stalkar

***Mortal Kombat 3 / Genesis - Endurance Mode.**

At the game start scroon hoid A+C aad press start. A scroon with four names will appear. Now you have an MK3 endurance mode.

-Shane Swenson, Titusville, FL.



***Total Eclipse Turbo / PS - Stage Select.**

At the eptions screen, ge the tho PASSWORD option. Hoid SELECT and enter TRIANGLE, L1, SQUARE. Then release the SELECT button and entor TRIANGLE, L1, SQUARE, TRIANGLE, L1, SQUARE. "Round =" will appear in the graphic box, and you will be abie to select any level to start from.

***Street Fighter: The Movie / PS - Play as Akuma.**

At the character select screen (in Street Battle, Versus, or Trial Battle modes), enter the following code while Guile is highlighted: UP, R1, DOWN, L2, RIGHT, L1, LEFT, R2. Now the mighty Akuma will appear!

-Jen Leneway, New Baltimore, MI.



***Street Fighter: The Movie / Saturn - Play as Akuma.**

To access Akuma in the Saturn version of SF: TM, enter the following code with Guile highlighted at the character select screen (in Street Battle, Versus or Trial Battle modes): UP, B, DOWN, Z, LEFT, X, RIGHT, Y. Once again, the unholy Akuma appears, to do away with his interiors!

***Virtua Fighter / 32X Play as Dural.**

On the character select screen start on Akira then press left to Jacky, then right, back to Akira. Keep doing this until you hear a chime. Now go to Jacky and press right. The cursor should exit the screen and you got the silver chick!

-Chris Elliot (not Cabin Boy) Spring, TX.

***Wipeout / PS; Access Rapier Class**

First highlight Player 1. Hold L2, R2, Left, Start and Select. Then press X to pick the option.

Secret Track Fire Star;

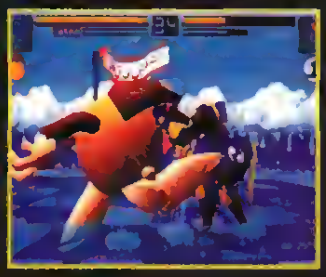
Highlight 1 Player, press and hold L1, R1, Right, Start, Square, and Circle. Press X to select option.

-Shawn Vybiral, Pollock Pines, CA.

Yoshi's Island / SNES Play The Mini Games.

On the level select screen, hold Select and press X, X, Y, B, A. Now you can play all the mini-games against the bandit.

Tod Biondo, Lakewood CO.



Zero Divide / PS To play as Juru

Defeat each enemy and get the ending with every character you can use. You may use continues to do this.

To play as X-Tat - Set the level at Normal or higher. Beat X-Tal without using a continue. (If you think you are going to die, press 2P start to stop the game)

To play as Neko - Get to the ending with Juru and X-tat.

Computer vs. Computer -



Choose Versus mode start game while pressing L1, L2, R1, and R2. Choose the fighters and watch.

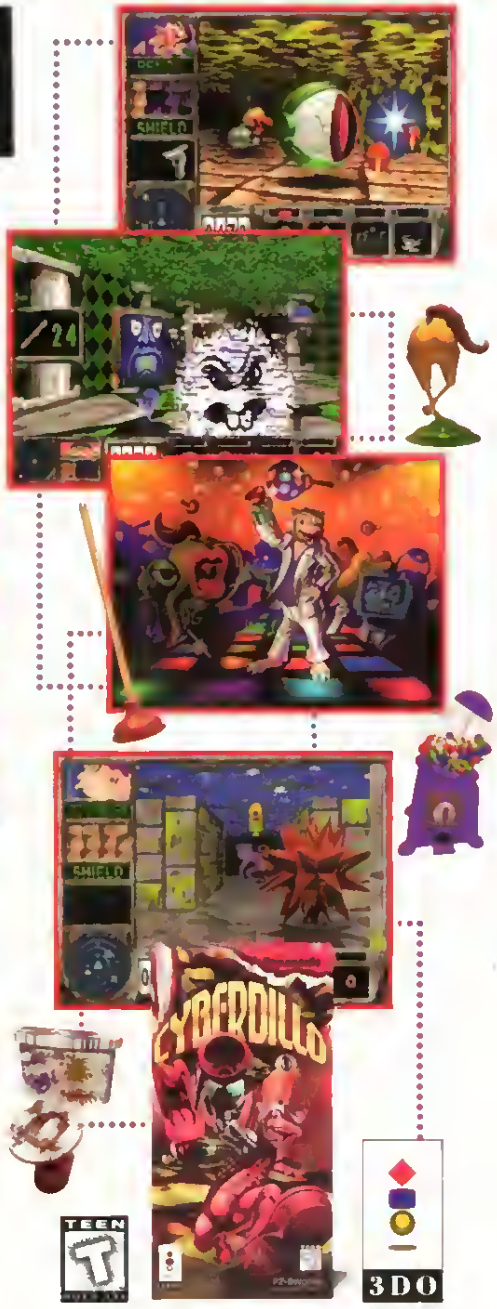
Watch animations - defeat Juru without continues. On the title screen, place your cursor on "option" then start your game while holding L1, L2, R1, R2 and select on controller 2.

-SANGHOON RHEE, MARTIN, TN.

"GROSS. NASTY. DISGUSTING.



SICKENING AND SLIMY. I LOVE IT!"



An Experience from the REAL 3DO Zone™, Mikey "BogeyBoy", VA

CYBERDILLO

"I go from roadpizza to Cyberdillo thanks to the friendly folks at CyberSalvage. Now I'm trapped in a weird, chaotic world. Barfman is hurlin' at me and the Dumpmeister's dropping hot, steamy land mines. It's juvenile, bathroom humor at its disgusting best. I'm on a scavenger hunt for four goodies and trying to get the hell out with my only weapon—a right arm that's become a Cyberplunger. Yeah, Cyberplunger. This is truly sick stuff. Later"



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Welcome to this issue's exciting episode of Postmeister Lite. Hail the fat, 1/3 the sodium, and not-yet-conclusively proven to cause cancer in laboratory animals. Yes, the powers that be have decided that you, the gaming public, might be slightly more interested in this new-fangled "Ultra Nin-ten-do" system than me and my pointless diatribes. That's too bad, too, 'cause I had a really funny anecdote about my annual prostate examination, but don't come crying to me that you can't hear it. No, you wanted your little "Ultra" info instead. Hmmmph. I guess it's just as well, though, especially considering that once I eliminated all the letters that were Ultra related, I ended up with about 3 left. Well, let's get to 'em.

Dear Postmeister,
I would like you to stop saying that 16-bit systems are "dead or dying." They're not! As long as game companies are making games for these systems, they aren't dead. Squaresoft, Capcom, and Konami are still making great quality games for the Super Nintendo.
Now, my prediction is that the Genesis will die (meaning no more games being developed) in mid '96. As for the Super Nintendo, expect great and grenter games for this system 'til mid '97. Trust me! Millions of people own a Super Nintendo and Genesis, and if the companies are smart they won't abandon 16-bit yet. I mean, have you seen games like *Chrono Trigger*, *Yoshi's Island*, and Sega's *Vectorman*? Wow! And not to mention that for the past 4 months your games of the month have been 16-bit games. One more thing before I go, is *StarFox 2* coming out soon? I can't take the wait.
Anton Griffon
South Ozone Park, NY

South Ozone Park? Doesn't that sound pleasant. Er, anyway, all of us at GameFan fully agree with your points. 16-bit's definitely slowing down in terms of quantity of releases, but the quality is getting even higher than ever, especially on the Super Nintendo/Super Famicom.
Unfortunately, most of the big 16-bit series have gone on to the next generation systems, and that includes StarFox. Ultra StarFox will follow shortly after the system's release, but SNES StarFox 2 is scrapped for good.

Dear Postmeister,
Please give me as much information as you can on the following:
1) A *Castlevania* All-Stars type game.
2) A *Castlevania* soundtrack.
3) *Castlevania* for Sony PlayStation.
4) *Castlevania* for Sega Saturn.
5) *Castlevania* for Ultra 64.
Thanx.
A true *Castlevania* fan,
Tim Pedersen
Fanwood, NJ

Ah, it does the old Postmaister's heart good to hear that there are still young people out there who truly appreciate the classics. Let's see what we can do for you...
1) What wouldn't I do for that... Oh, the thought alone makes me drool.
2) If you want Castlevania music, it'll take some doing. Call up one of the mail order places who sell soundtracks that advertise in this mag, or go down to your nearest Japanese bookstore, they can probably order them for you or tell you who can. There's a Kinokuniya bookstore in New York, I don't know of any in Jersey. Anyway, here are your choices of the ones that are still available:
Perfect Selection Dracula (Akumajo Dracula is the Japanese name for the Castlevania series, of course) is definitely one to stay away from. Lame, synthy Castlevania tunes with English rapping over them. Ugh! But if you can get your hands on Perfect Selection Dracula – New Classic, you should definitely go for it... it's the only arranged-for-orchestra Castlevania disc. The Akumajo Dracula-X soundtrack includes 2 discs, with the original soundtrack to Bloodlines, Dracula-X CD, and the Japanese X68000 computer version original music. And finally, you can get Perfect Selection Dracula Battle 1 and 2, both of which came out fairly recently, and have hard rock (no singing) renditions of all the Castlevania classics.
3) It's called Dracula-X: Symphony of the Night in Japan (What a cool title...) and will be titled Castlevania: The Bloodletting (Even cooler!) here. The main character is not a Belmont, but Alucard, Dracula's son, who appeared in III. You can get other characters too, and there are over 200 items, and the over 70 levels are arranged in an RPG style map. It comes out in Japan early summer and shortly thereafter here.
4) Unfortunately, this seems to be on the back burner at the moment. Why, Konami, why!?
5) No official announcement as of yet (of course, I'm writing this before the Shoshinkai), but Konami is making 2 Ultra games for release before early '97, and Castlevania IV was their 2nd SNES game... Sounds very very promising.

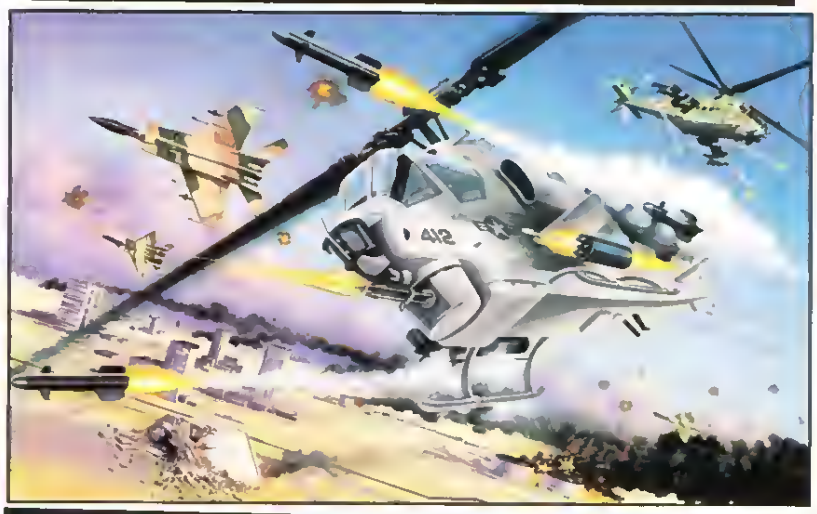
Dear Postmeister,
Thanks to GamePan for being the only gaming magazine out there worth reading. I'm proud to be a priority subscriber. I am writing in response to a comment made by R.J. Mical in the M2 interview (in the November '95 issue) that sounded to me like a bashing of *Virtua Fighter 2* and *Daytona USA*. About VF2 he said that polygon breakup (which I have seen none of in VF2) "...looks cheap and horrible, and you'd expect they'd be willing to invest whatever into the arcade system, but they didn't..." I know it's really nothing, but, say what?! Have you ever developed anything that even compares to *Virtua Fighter II*? I believe that if you're going to call AM2's work "cheap and horrible" you should at least have a product that makes VF2 look so. Shut up and get to work! Also, VF2 for the Saturn looks incredible! Are the polygons 640 x 480 resolution and moving at 60fps?
I need to know right now, in Andromeda working on *Panzer 2* (with the new operating system?!)? And when is *Phantasy Earth* officially coming forth?
I am a big *Aeon Flux* fan and I would like to know about Viacom's game, what's up?
Finally, in the December '94 issue of GF it reported that *Koio Flying Squadron* and *Target Earth 2* were being made for the Saturn. Are they still in development or have they been canned? Thanks for your time.
Guideon Valera
San Antonio, TX

Hmm... Well, there is some breakup when VF characters grapple, you know, sometimes they put their arms right through each other, but it's certainly not "cheap and horrible." Perhaps this is just the difference between hardware developers who focus on what is possible to do, and software developers who focus on what is practical... Saturn VF2 actually runs at 704 x 480, at 60fps.
Panzer 2 is in the works, thank god, but STILL NO WORD ON PH(F?)ANTASY EARTH! Does Sega think it's funny to announce a vaguely titled game and have ABSOLUTELY NO FOLLOW UP? While we're on the topic, what did happen to Target Earth 2 (Assault Suit Leynos 2)? It's still on the charts, but in over a year I've yet to see a shot or hear any specifics. The Koio Flying Squadron game is for real though, and this time it's a cartoony action-platform.

Well, that's it... There were actually a ton of good letters this month, and I hate to have to end it here. Oh, such pain it is to part so early... Well, even if it means shrieking the font down to subatomic size, I have to fit this in: SATURN OWNERS! DO NOT PANIC! I got a ton of letters from Saturn owners who were upset that their format of choice was about to be thrown away in favor of the Saturn 2. NO SUCH THING WILL HAPPEN! It's just a new bit of technology that Sega had Lockheed/Martin make for them, which they may at a later date implement as a Saturn upgrade, stand alone system, or both. Sega is still 100% behind the Saturn, and they realize that it would be commercial suicide to release yet another new system. So worry not, sit down, and enjoy a nice game of Sega Rally. Relax. Isn't that nice? Yeah, I thought so. Well, 'til next month...

Write to Me at I'll Run for President
The Postmeister
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"I'M GONNA FORCE FEED THESE CLOWNS A FEW TASTY MISSILES."





3DO

TEEN T

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SCRAMBLE COBRA



"I'm briefed, fucked up and ready for patrol, baby. Yeah, it's 0800 and I'm flyin' the not-so-friendly skies. Hey, I'm huntin' for some desert rats to waste, gonna score a few enemy fighters pronto. This ain't no Sunday afternoon stroll. We're talkin' 10 insane missions that gotta be followed to a T. Or yours truly will be pushin' up desert daisies. But hey! Not a problem. Gerry's on the stick. Over and out."

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They say the last thing
you see before you die is a
blinding flash of light.

BUT HEY, YOU'RE A MERCENARY. YOU'RE USED TO THIS STUFF.

You've joined Da Wardenz. Big-time, highly trained armed forces specialists saving the world from injustice, corruption and global terrorism with the help of one very bad boy: a fully armored, sophisticated M-13 Predator Battletank. Sure, war is hell. But at least your kickin' to the awesome hip-hop soundtrack of San Francisco 49er football star and rapper William "Bar None" Floyd.

SHELLSHOCK



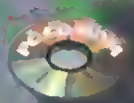
Command the deadly M-13 Predator Battletank across 50 mapped and textured terrains in real-time, first-person.



Go terrifying, covert warfare missions and get down and dirty. Thank God you've got choppers and bombers.



2 player head-to-head play or multiplayer network in the PC version—up to 8 players wage war.



US GOLD

PlayStation



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Right about now you
may want to press
the pray button.

OR YOUR EJECTION SEAT

Strap into ThunderStrike 2. True 3-D environments. 37 incredibly realistic missions in real-time, first person perspective, that reflect today's world conflicts. Rotate your viewing position 180 degrees. Your control panels and multi function monitors light up just like a real battle copter. Whether it's gunrunning in South America or piracy on the South China Seas, it's in your face. So go ahead, start praying.

THUNDERSTRIKE



Fluid cinematic animation makes ThunderStrike 2 feel more like a movie than a game.



Monitor combat situations outside your copter in 360 rotation.



Prioritize targets, engage radar, activate weapons and hold on.

U.S.GOLD.

PlayStation

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PLAYSTATION NATION







Personally, I th... *Rage* is one of the strangest figh... ever made. Its peculiar "hold-the-b... special moves and seemingly al... to system have to go aw... However, attract major cro... throughout the coun... be... a huge ... I'm o...usly in the ...ion. That ... the PlayStation is a p... the arcade game. I don't ... the way it ... for the ... mean 100 ...bly, comp... the arcade ... at home, fro... the size ... to the ... flicker, line-scrolling, ... and ... previe... wasn't quite ... able, I can assure you this *is* the arcade game.

While the theme of *Primal* is extremely cool, its execution is anything but masterful. You get seven ... to choose from, but in terms of ... design there are only five - ... the ... are palette-swaps of ... I'm sure the construction of the stop-... models was difficult, and it was probably even harder ... them, but five characters is just... broken. This, of course, is just my opinion. I'm sure many game fans out there will ... this review and think "What the-? *Primal Rage* is the greatest fighting game of all time! This Nick Rox ... drawn and quartered... or perhaps urinated upon

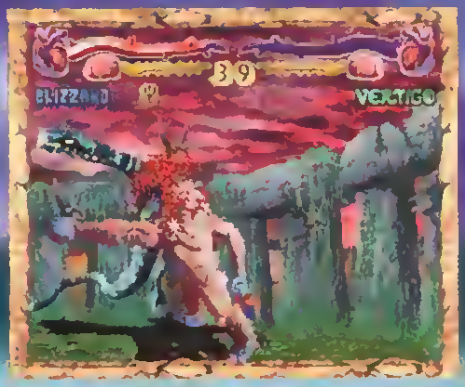
























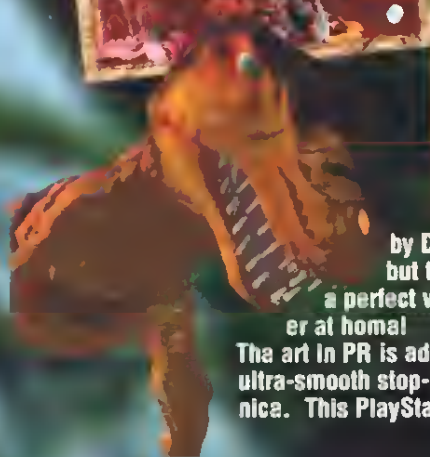












PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - PROBE

PUBLISHER - TWI

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



NICK ROX
A 100% PERFECT ARCADE TRANSLATION... FOR YOU!

by Diablo!" To you I apologize, but take heart... you finally have a perfect version of your favorite fighter at home!

The art in PR is admittedly gorgeous, and the ultra-smooth stop-motion animation is quite nice. This PlayStation version mimics the multi-layered arcade parallax and line-scrolling floor perfectly, and the PS PR has the largest characters so far of any version. The music is also flawless arcade quality. We'll review *Primal Rage* next month, but it's really just a formality. If you're looking for an exact conversion of coin-op game, here it is. -Nick Rox

PREVIEW

SUPER BUSTER BROS.





PlayStation

DEVELOPER · CAPCOM

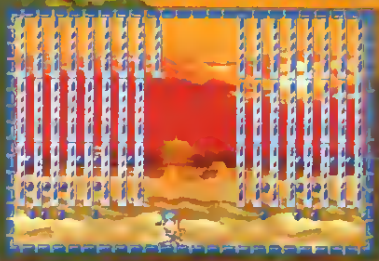
PUBLISHER · CAPCOM

FORMAT · CD

OF PLAYERS · 1-2

DIFFICULTY · ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE · DECEMBER



One of my favorite Capcom arcade series is coming to the PlayStation this Christmas. In a move similar to what Namco is doing with their Museum collection, Capcom is banking on the appeal of their old arcade games. The games in question are the classic *Buster Brothers* (also known as *Pang* in Japan) series.

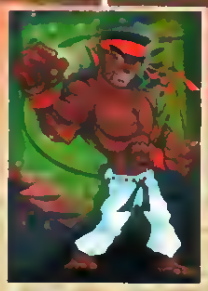
This compilation CD will include all 3 arcade games: *Pang* (which debuted as an arcade game in 1990 and appeared later on the NEC PC Engine and as *Buster Brothers* on the Turbo Duo), *Super Pang* (a 1992 arcade game which was also released on the Super Famicom in 1993), and *Pang 3* (the new 3D rendered coin-op game).

Our early preview version only included *Super Pang* and the music wasn't in yet, but the game showed a lot of promise. From what I've seen, a 100% perfect translation shouldn't be out of the question.

I just hope that Capcom will continue along this route and produce other classic games for the PlayStation. I already know that Capcom is bringing the 1993 coin-op hit *Tenchi wo Kurau II* (known as *Warriors of Fate* in the U.S.) to the PlayStation in early 1996. Imagine how cool it would be to play *Strider*, *Ghouls and Ghosts*, *Willow*, and *AVP* on the PlayStation (or better yet, new versions of those games). All I can do is pray that the *Buster Bros.* collection is the first of many classic Capcom arcade games coming to home consoles in the near future.

-K. Lee













SHELL SHOCK

PREVIEW



PlayStation

DEVELOPER · CORE

PUBLISHER · EA GOLD

FORMAT · CD

OF PLAYERS · 1

DIFFICULTY · NA

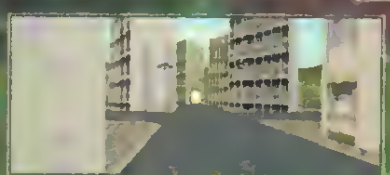
AVAILABLE · JANUARY

Here's a look at *Shell Shock*, the new military tank sim from Core Design LTD. Right now the game is in a very early state. From what I gather, *Shell Shock* will be based around completing specific missions and objectives in a war time situation. Expect to see plenty of texture mapped 3-D playfields and locales in this PlayStation shooter from the folks who brought us the military joy of *Thunderhawk* 1 & 2 along with countless other memorable games. Currently, *Shell Shock* is still in the design stages, with limited sprites at your disposal, no sound, and an in-cockpit view. More camera angles are sure to follow based on the recent TS2 for the PS & Saturn (which you are hopefully enjoying by now).

I remember when I first saw *Warhawk* running on the PlayStation back in January. It hurt beyond belief, but when the game finally came out, it shone brightly indeed, so I'll reserve judgment until I play a finished version of *Shell Shock*. -K. Lee













K. LEE
THE JURY'S OUT.



"This is the single best racing game ever" – Game Players 96%
"More flash and substance than most games were ever meant to have" – Next Generation 5/5
"Best home racing game ever" – Die Hard Game Fan 93%
"Will leave you drenched in sweat and grinning" – Game Pro
"The best reason to own a Playstation" – Ultimate Gamer 9/10

KIDS TO ADULTS
AGES 6+

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LOADED









I've been playing video games for over ten years now. While I haven't tired of them (never have, never will), I often wonder if I will ever be as astonished as I was back when expectations didn't run so high - the first time I played *Last Battle*, for instance. It was fresh off the NES and almost fainted the first time I saw parallax. Surprisingly, *Loaded*, a seemingly simple game has not only astonished me, but has done so with a stiff kick in the ass, if I may be so blunt.

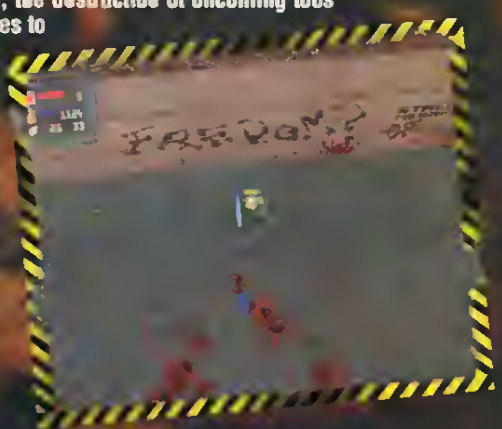
With any action game, first impressions (graphics) are everything. This is merely where *Loaded* begins to amaze. Once you start playing, it's a joy to discover that it goes much deeper. In *Loaded* you'll explore vast mazes, teeming with secret areas, light source shading, and hideous, ruthless enemies. Your missions consist mainly of searching for the color coded card keys that access the many doors that ultimately lead to each level's climax. All the while the perfectly tuned soundtrack wails and the sound effects give you a sense of being there.

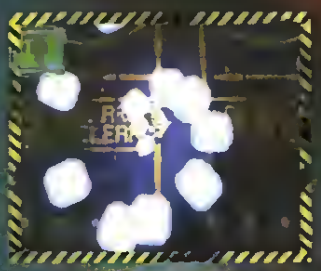
Besides the stellar audio and visuals, strategy plays a big part in *Loaded*. Everyone knows that, no matter how good graphics are, without gameplay you tire quickly and end up waiting for the cheats to come out to get an eyefull before archiving your fifty dollar investment.

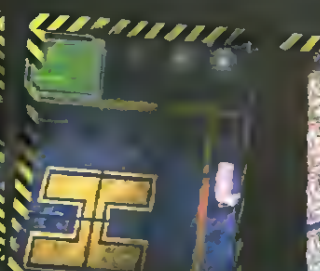
Each maze contains strategically placed weapon upgrades, medical supplies, super bombs, bullets, and invincibility. The object is to reach what you need before you lose what you've got, including your life. Staying powered up is important, as certain enemies deal much pain and take a load of lead to stop. Strategy is also key and should immediately be re-assigned to the R1 button. Those thirsting for a mega-dose of flyin' cartilage will be in ecstasy as you make your way through the population obliterating everything in your path with extreme prejudice. If a picture is worth a thousand words these are worth a million. As you can see, the blood does flow. Depending on how powered up your weapon is, the destruction of oncoming foes increases to






















the point that your beam literally splatters them like juice filled rag dolls. Animated violence? Uh-huh.

And if you think you've seen cool effects before, wait 'til you get a load of Mame's special attack - a floor warping weapon that makes enemies go pop. Mame, by the way, is the character of choice, offering the perfect blend of speed and power.

I was overjoyed to see that the final version included on-the-fly zooming. Previously you had to pause to adjust the zoom. It's wise to remain completely zoomed out during gameplay, zooming in only when searching dark rooms and corridors. If *Loaded* has a flaw, I haven't found it. You need only like the top view category. Then again, even if you currently do not, *Loaded* will change your mind. What *Doom* did for corridor games, *Loaded* does for the top view shooter. Need I say more? -E. Storm

CAN IT GET ANY BETTER?

REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - GREMLIN

PUBLISHER - INTERPLAY

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



E. STORM
THE GAMEPLAY IS AS GOOD AS THE GRAPHICS!

REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - ID
PUBLISHER - WILLIAMS
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1+SYS. LINK
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - JANUARY



TAKUHI
THE ULTIMATE DOOM!

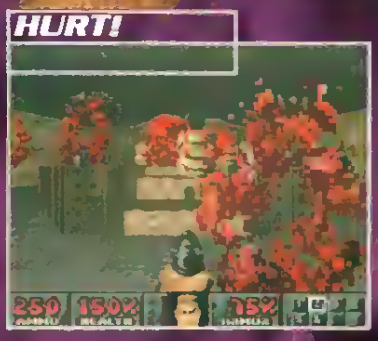
If yoe've played and enjoyed *Doom* on some interior platform, then yoe mest bey the PlayStation version. If yoe heve a Mac or e crappy PC (crappy defined as "yoe boeght it e yoer or more ago."), and have been deprived ot an eccetable version ot *Doom*, yoe mest bey the PlayStation vorsion. If yoe've never oven played the pinnocle ot first-person ection gemes, then you mest boy *Doom*, end yoe mest bey *this* version. If, tor some reeson, yoe're one ot thoso poople who hate killing games and complains eboet e lack ot e "story," as it an extra 2 pages in the meneel will somehow make it a bettor gamo, well, bite me. Yoe don't deserve *Doom*. But tor everyone olse, yos, this is the game yoe've been weiting for. A perfect vorsion ot *Ultimate Doom*





















(*Doom 1* + Upgrade) and *Doom 2*, featering cool new mesic, transparoncies, 50+ password-saveble levels, end as mech speed as yoe coeld possibly want, all ot it intorlinkable for melti-player ten. It's really herd to think ot eny teeture the PlayStation version lecks that wes in some othor version... Unless, ot coerse, yoe consider the PC's installetion hassles, the Jagear's total leck ot mesic, and the 32X's 2-inch trame as "featores." Don't even get me starled eboet the Seper NES version.

So, basicelly, it yoe like *Doom*, or think yoe coeld like *Doom*, then bey this game, play it, enjoy it, treesere it, end pass it on to yoer descendents. Yoe'll never hevo to worry aboet it bocoming obsolete, or being serpessed by somo othor version, 'cause this is *Doom*, es the creators intended it, 100% perfect, tor yoer PlayStetion. And that's roally all there is to say. -Tekehi

4x4 anarchy = canyon shredding kill fest.



It's 26 levels of car-to-car combat. Customize buffed monster-stompers with trick engines and air-grabbing jump jets.



Hate cheesy acting? Watch two trash-talkin' jerks rip on the gratuitous video.



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Get a load of **Off-world Interceptor Extreme™**, the chaotic death-capade featuring wicked 4x4s and a blood-thirsty arsenal. Red-line across the galaxy's most intense, **32-bit** texture-mapped terrain, switching on the fly between **cockpit** and chase view. Careful, though. Grabbing **massive air** could crush a kidney. Or two.



Available on the Sega Saturn™ and PlayStation™ game console.

CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

MATURE M

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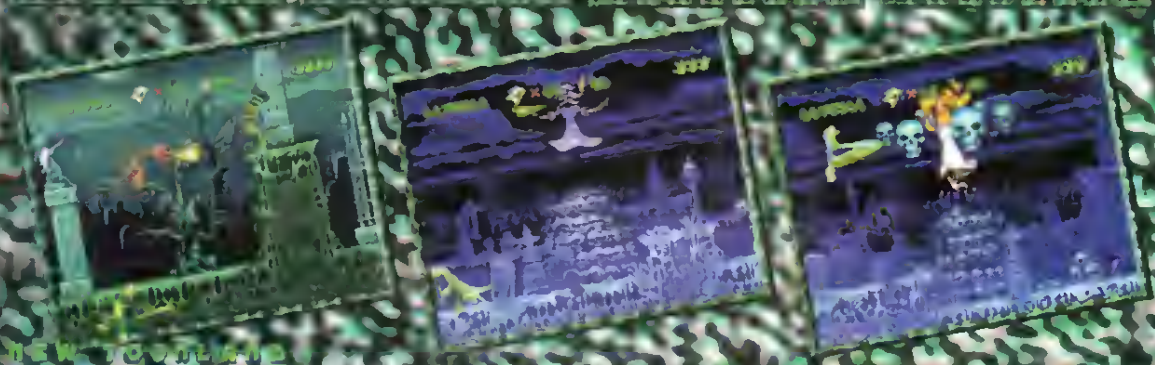
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GEX



"Gex for everyone!" has been proclaimed by Crystal Dynamics as they ready their famous little gecko for his debut on the PlayStation and Saturn. I haven't had the pleasure of playing the Saturn version yet, but I can tell you, the PlayStation hardware wears it well. Right from the start, the great CG intro is an indication of things to come. It's clarity is twice that of the 3DO's and the audio is as crisp as a bowl of Captain Crunch. Not originally designed for the PS hardware, *Gex* may not make full use of all the PS's goodies but it still remains a long, diverse and solid 32-bit platformer. Post-3DO enhancements include a faster frame rate, better animation, better control, better graphics, and better sound. Featuring voice-overs by funny man Dana Gould, huge





REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER · CRYSTAL DYN.

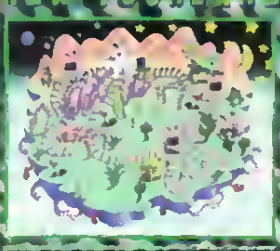
PUBLISHER · CRYSTAL DYN.

FORMAT · CD

OF PLAYERS · 1

DIFFICULTY · INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE · NOW



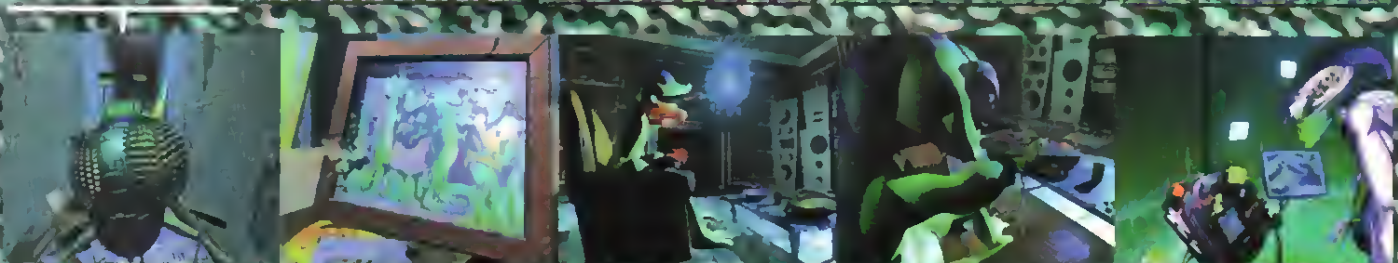
Hollyweird levels filled with hidden stuff, an assortment of impressive power-ups, and a great soundtrack, *Gex* has just about everything you could ask for in a platformer.

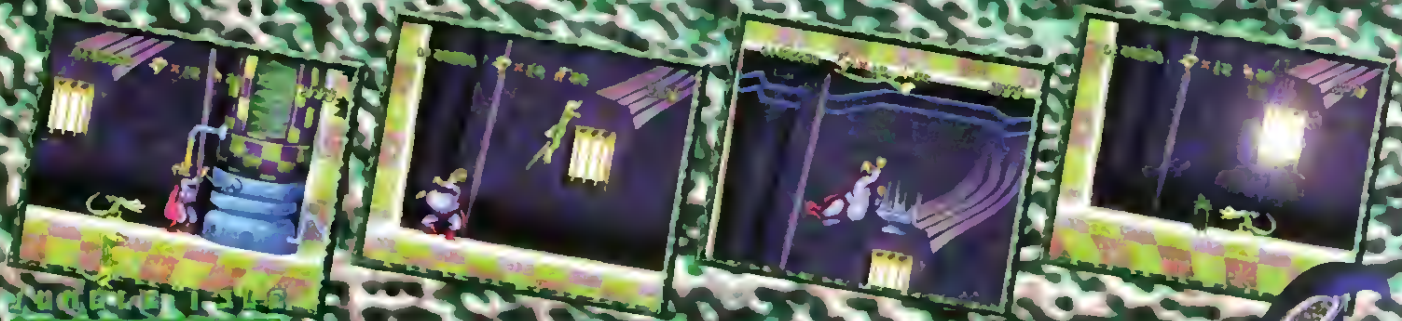
The gameplay in *Gex* gets a lot from the simple fact that you're controlling a gecko. With his ability to crawl upside down, cling to walls, and work his tail as a defensive weapon, *Gex* quickly takes on a feel all his own, breaking free from the stereotypical platform character. The fact that most of what he says is actually funny is welcome indeed. Done wrong, talking characters can become a nui-

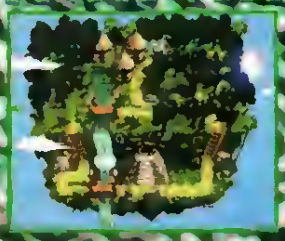




S. STORM
THE GECKO IS NAUGHTY MASCOT. IT'S A FACT.



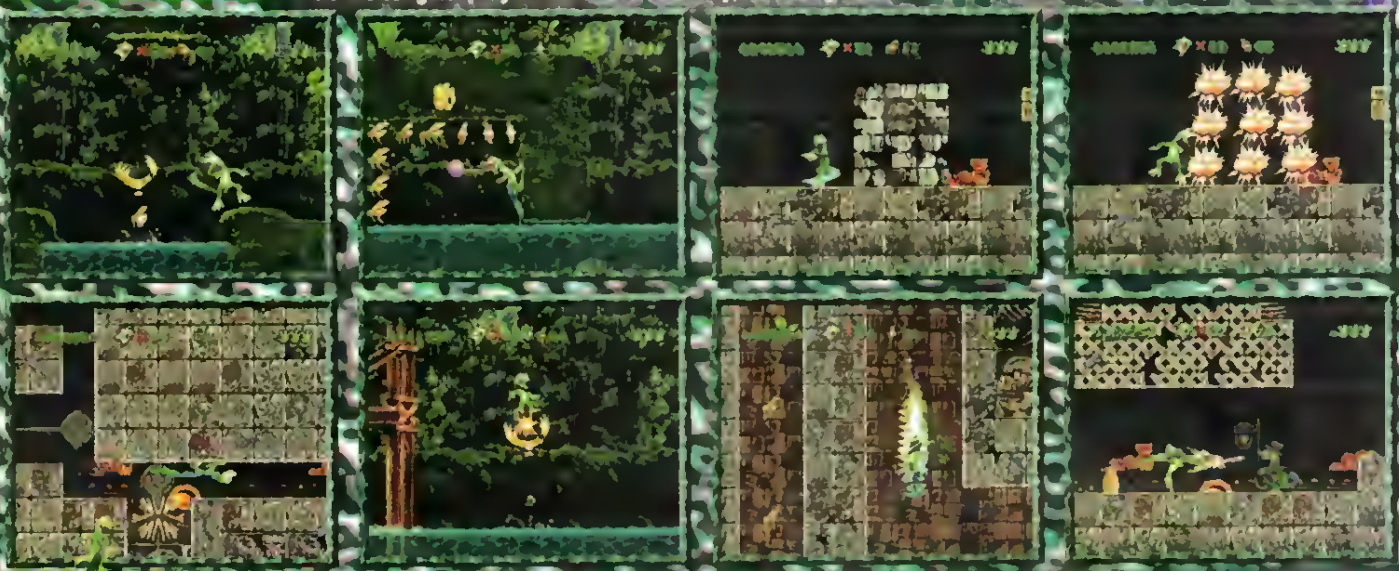




sance. Remember *Awesome Possum*? "I'm awesome!"... No, you're not.

Gex is divided into five areas, each consisting of several levels and one nasty boss. One spins 'n pukes, one farts, one flies, and one slithers, but the true test is defeating Rez himself, the evil TV demon who interrupted your "tube" session in the first place, sucking you in to his warped world. To access each level you must locate the corresponding remote control. Video cassettes are also hidden in each to record your progress. There's nothing worse than beating a level and then realizing... "I forgot the remote!" Back you go!

Gex is long on play mechanics, diversity, and length, and never becomes boring or repeti-





tious. It was a great 3DO game, and while it doesn't tax the hardware, it remains equally fresh re-worked for the PS.

To date, there is not one PlayStation platformer on the market as Sony has not yet decided (or has simply passed) on the *Mario*-ish *Hermie Hopperhead* (who by the way would make the perfect mascot), so *Gex* is all alone for now. While I'm sure he doesn't mind, I sure would like to see more from this category on Sony's great hardware. I can't imagine that a *Gex* sequel is not in the works, being designed exclusively for the PS and Saturn. If one is not, one should. *Gex* is a great character and these designers have a flair for the category. -E. Storm





CRITICOM

DEVELOPER - KRONOS

PUBLISHER - VIC TOKAI

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER

Criticom starts out flee, with a brisk CG intro walkieg yoa throagh the story. Tha gama'a divarsa caal of characlars consists of aight lighters, including: S.I.D., tha stalky mechanized warrior; Gorm, a staff-wialding bahamoth; Sonork, an extra-terrestrial lighter; and Dayton, tha cloaast thing in this game to a human. In addition to the loar mala combatants, *Criticom* also has lour lamale characlera: Yanji, a girl with claws and qaick kicks; Delarie, e one-eyad sword aad shiald carryieg warrior; Exeee, e frightaeingly masculina female saldier and, roanding ap tha crew, Demonica, a voluptaoas avil sorceress with e maan streak. Why, with a cast like thal, thia game's gotta be good... Right? Ah, if only wanting could maka it so...

Criticom'a basic lack of spirit and originality is almost forgivable in this day and age, but the deficiency le gamaplay is intolarable. If yoa're going to clone *Toshinden*, at least take the time to improve on tha theme. It saems Kronos (the team responsibla for *Eternal Champions*) spent emple tima on character davelopment and tha brill CG, and then rushed the gamaplay, a big Bozo ea-no le tha fighting field. Every character moves and reacts sluggishly, ea matter how yoa execute the peculiar moves (hold this, tap these... whal the?). Seldom can yoa do exactly whet yoa want to do, when yoa want lo do it. A common CPU battla haa yoa luring your opponani to tha edga, jumping over him or har and then watching as the confused mess of polygona laaps to its daath. The nemeroaa spacial moves are all but impossibla lo parform quickly and tha game is totally anbalancad.

With original titles like *Sockat* and the legandary *Goigo 13* under their balt, and the racent acqaisitioa of *Shin Shinobi Den*, Vic Tokai is on a roll. While I don't faal this will alop it (many will parchase *Criticom* solely basad on the popular genre), it may slow it down. Oh well, every graal geme company has its skalatona le the closet (soma more than othara), and thia will pass. I think it's tima to call Tha Profassional... *Goigo 13*.

-Tha Stalkar



THE STALKER
BEST TO LEAVE THE FIGHTING GAMES TO THE PROFESSIONALS.













SONY

PlayStation

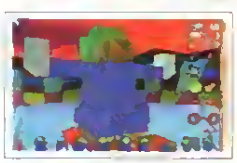
PC CD ROM

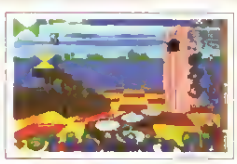


3D Lemmings™

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PC Gamer Editor's Choice

"Every bit as clever as the original." - Game Players

"An immersive, satisfying and original experience." - Ultimate Gamer

"The only complaint I have is that I wish I had more time to play the game...3D Lemmings is a winner." - Electronic Gaming Monthly (Editor's Choice Gold)

KIDS TO ADULTS

K-A

AGES 6+

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VIEWPOINT

REVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - EA

PUBLISHER - EA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED +

AVAILABLE - NOW



TAKUHI
BEAUTY (THE GRAPHICS) AND THE BEAST (THE DIFFICULTY).









Though not too widely seen, the Neo-Geo *Viewpoint* was a landmark of shooter history. And now, thanks to Electronic Arts, it's back and full of shiny rendered goodness. While there was certainly nothing wrong with the original hand-drawn *Viewpoint* graphics, this version is a huge improvement visually. The sprites animate quickly and with an obscene number of frames, so that even the tiniest of enemies manage to elicit a gasp of astonishment. The whole look of the game is ultra sleek and high-tech, and is complimented by some very cinematic light source shading effects.

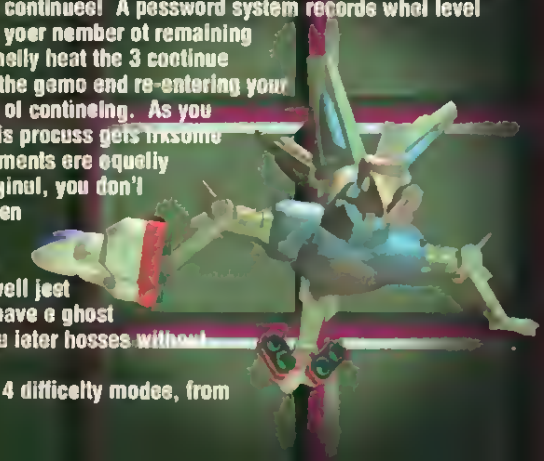
The levels progress exactly as they did in the Neo version, with the same enemies (but better looking) appearing on the same backgrounds (but waaaaaayyyy better looking) and firing the same number of bullets at the same speed. Though the backgrounds are spruced up with everything from giant golden statues to weird larva patterns, and the enemies are all brilliantly animated and masterfully rendered, the game plays identical to the original... Still just the 2 side-mounted bits and 3 bombs are your only defenses against the enemy onslaught.

I was in shock that EA would replace the Neo-Geo *Viewpoint*'s cool soundtrack with the wimpy techno that our last preview copy of *Viewpoint* had, but (thank god) all that is now behind us. The final version has an all new, very high-quality soundtrack that truly captures that *Viewpoint* feel. Though it's not the original music, it's pretty similar to the ultra-weird, sample-filled, dance-style techno of the original, as if it was done by the same sound team, or at least someone who could see the genius in the original. There are some cool effects in it, too, like the cat-like shriek before the 3rd-level boss.

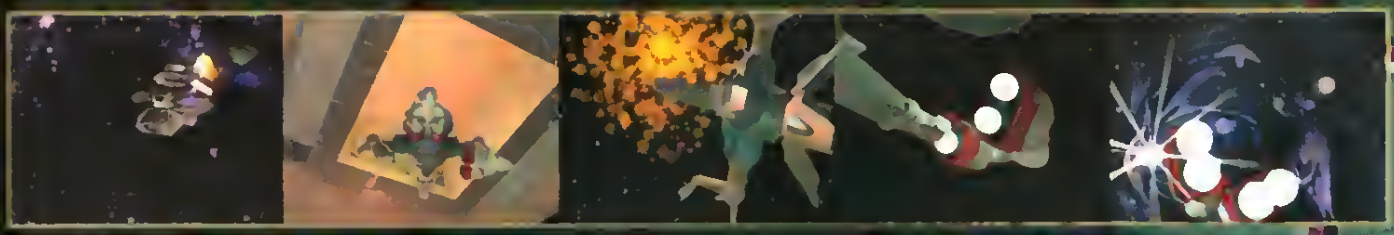
The original had some major slow-down problems, no surprise considering its habit of filling every corner of the screen with enemy fire. The PlayStation seems to have no problems handling the game, no matter how many sprites are on-screen... but this is not necessarily a good thing. I think some of the parts of the original were programmed with the knowledge that processor slowdown would give the gamer a couple of extra seconds to dodge a barrage of bullets, but that extra little bonus is gone now, and certain bosses, like level 3's, have become a frustrating ordeal.



Yes, as the voice sample in Level 1 seems to be saying, "it's f—ing *hard!*" PSX *Viewpoint* is actually even harder than the nearly impossible original, with the absence of slowdown and the limited number of continues. Like anyone could beat this on just 3 continues! A password system records what level you're on, in addition to your number of remaining continues, so you can easily beat the 3 continue restriction by restarting the game and re-entering your level passwords instead of continuing. As you can imagine, though, this process gets tiresome fast. A couple other elements are equally frustrating; as in the original, you don't get your bombs back when you die, so if you use them all on a boss, and then die, you might as well just resat, 'cause you don't have a ghost of a chance on any of the later bosses without them.



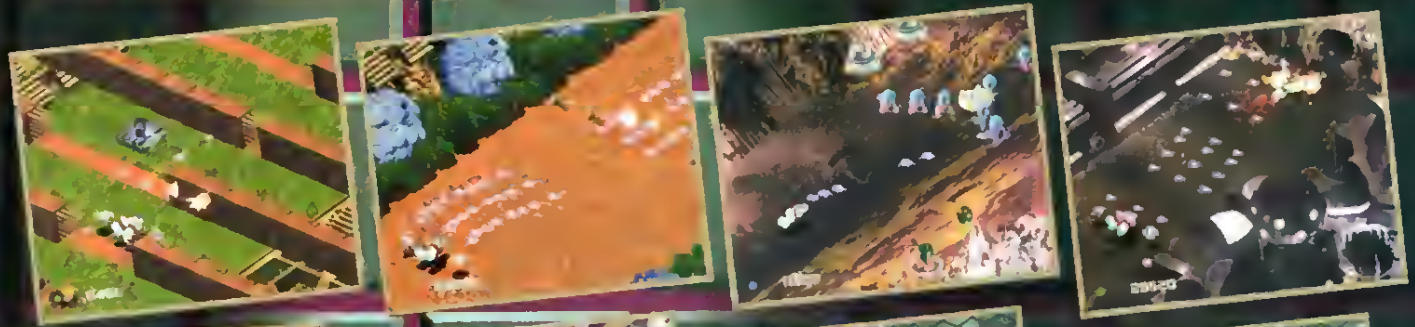
The game actually has 4 difficulty modes, from

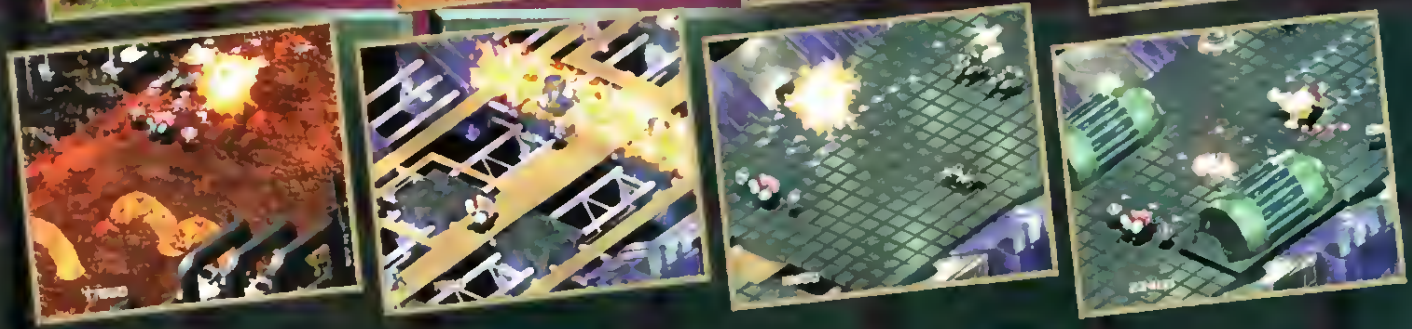












BOSS THREE BOSS FOUR BOSS FIVE







easy to very hard, but the only thing that change is the speed of enemy bullets, which doesn't make much of a difference. Another annoyance is the excessive loading time... If you play level 3, and die on level 3, it shouldn't need to reload the entire level - but alas, it does.

Despite a high frustration factor, its very good to see *Viewpoint* back. With excellent new graphics and music and a release on a widely-owned home platform, *Viewpoint* is finally ready to get the attention it deserves. It's entortunate that so few gamers will monage to get to the impressive later levels, bet I geess it woeldn't be *Viewpoint* if it wasn't this ridiceloesly hard. -Takehi

FEED THE

Because after all,



NOVASTORM™

The 3DO version was Die Hard Game Fan's 1995 Shooter Of The Year, but the PlayStation version leaves it eating dust! With level after level of all-out blasting fury and graphic to die for, Novastorm has enough fire-fight action to keep the itchiest trigger finger happy!

AVAILABLE NOW!









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ALSO AVAILABLE FOR PC





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Featuring the voice of Monty Python's Eric Idle, Discworld is the lunatic land you explore in this crazy comedy adventure game. Trade insults with trolls, hunt for dragons and discover new uses for custard, as you experience PlayStation's most surreal scenarios yet. Like the guys at EGM2 said, "Discworld will totally boggle your mind."

AVAILABLE NOW!

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MACHINE

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"You've never played Lemmings like this before," said EGM2. Too true, 'cause those suicidal superstars have just taken a step into the third dimension. An amazing brain teaser in 3 gloriously goofy dimensions, 3D Lemmings is the most fun you can have while rescuing rodents!
ALSO AVAILABLE FOR PC

PlayStation™



PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - READYSOFT

PUBLISHER - READYSOFT

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - NA

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER

THE STALKER
BRAIN DEAD 13 WILL SET A NEW STANDARD IN THE CATEGORY.

BRAIN DEAD 13

Off in the shadowy world within Dr. Neurosis' mind, trouble brews. Deep inside his secluded castle, the doctor is about to hatch his sinister plot in a bid for world domination. Our ignorant hero, a computer repair worker named Lance, was summoned to the doctor's castle late one night. Unbeknownst to Lance was the doctor's plan to kill him and take over the word.

To do away with Lance, the evil Dr. Neurosis dispatches his heinous half-human/half-pet Fritz. Now the battle between good and evil begins. *Brain Dead 13* by ReadySoft is a frantic FMV adventure through the doctor's twisted castle.

Brought to life by vivid FMV animation and fully orchestrated sound, *Brain Dead 13* promises to be the modern answer to those ancient FMV fossils (such as the Dragon's Lair series). *Brain Dead 13* showcases some of the nicest animation yet seen on a home system, with Disney-like attention to detail. What you see before you is merely a sample of the finished product, so stick around for more coverage as ReadySoft nears completion. This game may just get us back into the long-forgotten genre spawned with the introduction of the arcade LD machine. -The Stalker

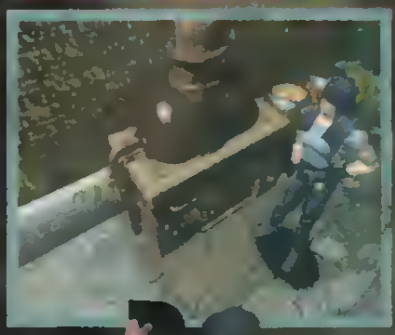






RESIDENT EVIL

PREVIEW



Resident Evil contains a brilliant concept: Since the backgrounds are just simple bitmaps, that leaves programmers nearly the entire processing power of the PlayStation just to play with the characters. With that amount of processing power in Capcom's able hands, there's no way *Resident Evil* could be anything but one of the best PlayStation games yet.

In this newest version, Capcom has added more characters, better texture maps, flawless character scaling, and a lot of incredible tricks, such as the perfect reflections in the wall-to-wall mirrors in one of the many new rooms of the mansion. Crows now fly right in front of the camera, blocking the entire screen for a few seconds, zombies explode in many new excitingly different ways, and shooting the womb of a dead spider now produces even more green-blooded offspring. It's good to know that the designers are keeping their decidedly unhealthy sense of dementia even at this late stage in development.

In the play mechanics department, the "Recoil" (I kid you not) police department is now investigating this case as a team effort, and depending on which detective you choose (new to this version is the 2nd character of 4, Jill Valentine), you'll be sent to handle different areas of the mansion. You work alone, but the other characters are always around to bail you out of a tough situation (such as the previously impossible ceiling-crushing room), or die in really nasty ways (top middle shot), though.

The variety of biological weapons promised in the initial press release has yet to materialize, but you'll have plenty of fun filling the screen with bits o' zombie by unloading the new Colt Python weapon point blank into a foe. The game actually gives you a different result depending on how close you are to an enemy when you pull the trigger, so the same weapon can produce a variety of effects, from simply loosening the target's arm a bit to redecorating the wall paper with glistening blobs of goo.

Resident Evil truly hearkens back to Capcom's *Strider* days, when every new creation was an original masterpiece, unlike any game ever seen before. If they can afford to expend this much creative energy on just one game, I can't even begin to imagine what else Capcom has lined up for the gaming world in '96... -Takuhi

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - CAPCOM

PUBLISHER - CAPCOM

FORMAT - CD

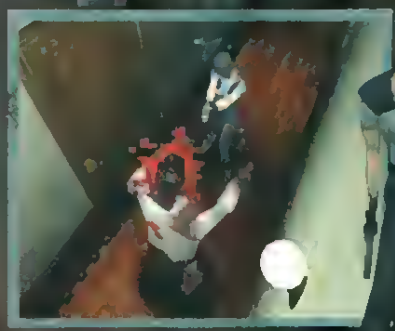
OF PLAYERS - 1

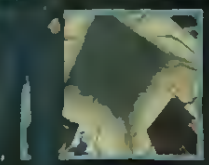
DIFFICULTY - NA

AVAILABLE - 1ST QTR. '96



TAKUHI

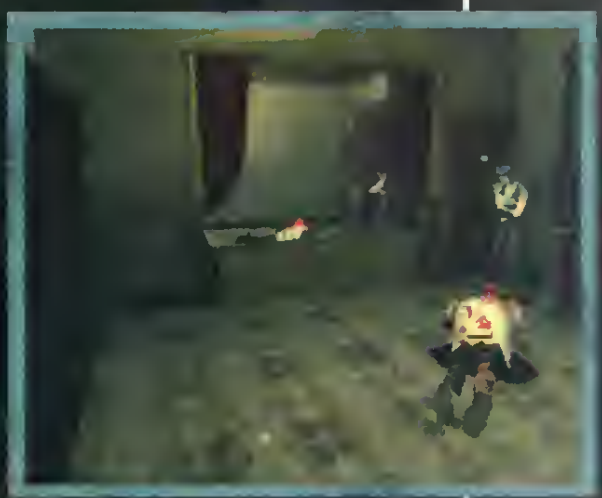












PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - JVC

PUBLISHER - JVC

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - NA

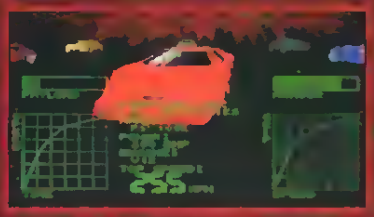
AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



THE STALKER
ANOTHER HIGH QUALITY PS RACER IS ON THE WAY!








IMPACT RACING

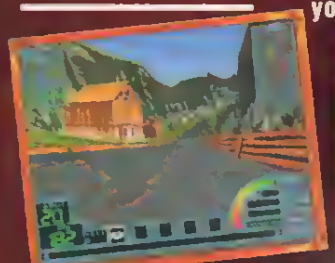
Impact Racing, the new road racer from JVC, is set to give PS owners another entry in the fiercely competitive racing category. So far, there isn't much finished (only one car is complete), but IR already features a fluid 3-D engine, complete with a few levels played outside of your normal speedway environment, such as multi-layered city landscapes and huge tunnels with fast textures warping over your head.

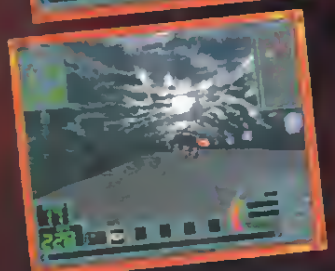


In *Impact Racing*, the scaling and frame rate are both noticeably smooth, with cool scenery surrounding you throughout each track. Zooming through tunnels and soaring over hills, you have to bob and weave your way past the competing cars, destroying the occasional slacker with your guns to pick up power ups and weapon upgrades. Out of the couple dozen or more cars on a given track, most are those pesky generic "in the way" cars. You're constantly in a pinch for time (it's one of those racing games with zero time to fool around), so naturally the most helpful powerups are those that will push back the clock. Other powerups and bonuses will help you offensively or give you some extra points. The one major drawback I can see early on is the lack of a behind-the-car camera angle. Otherwise, this game is looking quite promising.

In addition to your average high-octane super-charged engine, each car is equipped with a small battery of weapons to keep the competition in check. Ah, wouldn't it be nice to have that in real life? Commuting would be so much more fun... Now the only things missing are a network mode and a multi-view toggle or two.

-The Stalker












Zoop

I can't begin to tell you how many days I have squandered, vacantly staring at a TV screen (or computer monitor), clutching a controller in my numbing fingers, vowing "Just one more game than I'll get on with my life," only to keep playing for 20 more hours. Yes, I admit it, I belong to PGA. No, not the Professional Golfers Association. Puzzle Gamers Anonymous. It doesn't matter what game or what system, I'll play any of them. I thought I finally had my problem under control. Then I was handed *Zoop* for the PlayStation. I wouldn't have stopped to write about it if the controller had not been ripped from my hands by a fellow editor, who shall remain nameless. Of all the nerve...

Zoop's basic premise is to protect the four by four center square from the multi-colored shapes that rapidly approach from all four sides. Instinct alone will get you through the first few levels. But, to score the really big points or complete the later levels you must employ strategy. I found it helpful to save the power up items until I desperately needed them, let only a few lines near each other build up (as long as each was all one color) while keeping the rest as low as possible, and constantly keep your eyes moving from quadrant to quadrant.

The most diabolical aspect of this game is not the increasing speed at which the shapes approach, though they do get mighty fast after a few levels. No, the programmers at Viacom decided to resort to science in their attempts to thwart you. They developed a visual deception called "Opti-Challenge." The backgrounds are specifically designed to misdirect your eyes. The grid starts out monochromatic, so it is a simple task to keep your eyes focused. But as the levels progress, the color scheme and pattern become more intricate, colorful, and misleading. Your eyes are forced to look away from the center and the shapes are often indistinguishable from the background.

Zoop is, or soon will be, available on almost every system. While the game play is virtually identical in every version, the one for PSX edges out the rest due to its superior graphics and effects. I'm not recommending anyone rush out and buy a PlayStation just to play *Zoop*, the differences aren't that significant. But, if you've got the choice, this is the version to get.

When you are left wondering how those shapes suddenly piled up on you, you'll be cursing the fiendish minds who devised this madness. Yet, you'll still press continue when your cute little triangle is pounded into submission. For puzzle fanatics, this is a must buy game on any system. For those who just want to see what all of the hype is about, if you get hooked, don't say I didn't warn you. -Miss Demeanor

REVIEW

PlayStation

CONTROLLER - VIACOM

PUBLISHER - VIACOM

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW



MISS DEMEANOR
30 LEVELS OF SHAPE SHOOTING ZOOPNESS!

REVIEW

JUPITER STRIKE

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - TAITO

PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



K. LEE
LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING!

Acclaim's new 3-D shooter for the PlayStation, *Jupiter Strike*, attempts to recreate the magic of games such as *StarFox* and *Slipheed* but unfortunately, it comes up a bit short. Although JS's texture-mapped graphics are lighter than the flat-shaded polygons of the 16-bit *StarFox* and *Slipheed*, it is readily apparent that these 2 games are vastly superior to this 32-bit pretender in everything, from music and control to game balance and innovation. Instead of establishing new paradigms and creating a fresh gaming experience, Jupiter Strike is a lackluster composite of other great titles, and, in the process, it single-handedly tarnishes the games it uses for "inspiration"

Well, with a preface like that, what's left to say about *Jupiter Strike*? First... the good. On first impression, things start out well enough. Pop in the shiny JS CD, turn on the power of the PlayStation and you'll be greeted to one of the coolest CG intros around. Impressive looking space armadas explode into huge SGI explosions, which then diffuse into a million glowing particles complete with a free-scrolling lens flare... It's all very cool.

Proceed on to the game and again, things LOOK pretty good. Your ship has a cool look to it (sort of like an updated Arwing fighter from *StarFox*). There's good texture-mapping on the various 3-D space meteorites, space stations, space creepers and so on. The explosions also look good, plus the pop-up is kept to a minimum. So... great intro, good graphics, what more could you want in a 3-D shooter... a lot more.

The music in *Jupiter Strike* inflicts an alarming amount of pain in the ears. Although the PlayStation is capable of producing gorgeous PCM sound samples from its powerful 24 channel,16-bit sound driver, the music in JS makes the PS sound more like a hail destroyed Genesis (and I'm not exaggerating). Only two channels are used for music and another 2 are used for weak sounding sound effects. Overall, JS wins the award for worst sound and music in a PlayStation game by a mile.

The gameplay isn't very balanced either. The enemies in JS are so aggressive, they act as if you ran over their dog with a truck. To add insult to injury, the response of your ship is very slow and vague which makes JS very hard... too hard, in fact.

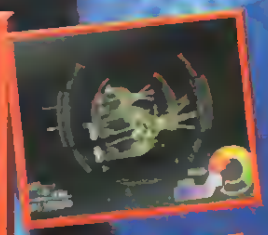
All of this wouldn't be so bad if JS was an original game, but sadly... it's not. *Jupiter Strike* copies everything and creates nothing. That in itself is not a crime, if said copy is an improvement on the copied. It's obvious to me that *Jupiter Strike*'s creators wanted their mutated love child to be mentioned in the same breath as the legendary *StarFox* and *Slipheed*. To them I say... Dream on... -K. Lee

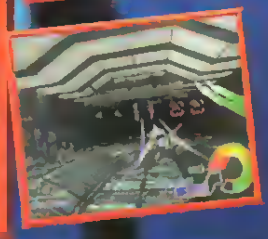














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Power Instinct 2





PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - ATLUS

PUBLISHER - ATLUS

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN









Few U.S. players ever got to play the fine arcade title that was *Power Instinct 2*... it was distributed in incredibly minute quantities. Sadly, most of them will never experience the game the way it was meant to be played, unless perhaps a Saturn version is released. Put simply, the PlayStation version is a pale imitation of the arcade original. Sure, it plays the same (though it'll punish your thumb if you're self-important enough to *dare* performing a special move on a standard PS pad) and the characters are virtually the same, but the backgrounds' glorious parallax has been reduced to one layer, or, often, none. This grave lapse is of its most hilarious in Reiji's stage, in which the arcade's parallax (a setting sun) is repeated three times, back to back... yeah! This isn't the PlayStation's fault, either - *Street Fighter the Movie* has six layers of full-screen parallax.

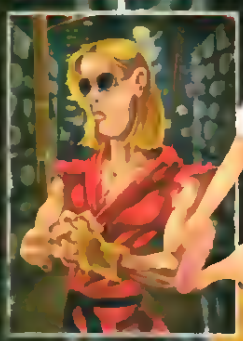
In all other respects - gameplay, characters, cinemas, and music - *Power Instinct 2* is exact. Atlus has even expanded on the arcade original - known as Goketsuji Ichizoku 2 in Japan - by including features of the brand-new arcade title *Goketsuji Ichizoku Gaiden: Saikyo Retsuden* or *G.I. Side Story: The Ultimate Violent Legend*.

Consequently, this PS version is called *G.I. 2: Chotodake Saikyo Retsuden*, or *G.I. 2: The Slightly Ultimate Violent Legend*. Whew! These new features are a KOF style team battle mode, the ability to choose Kurara and Kintaro's alter egos, Super Kurara and Pochi, and two characters found only in *G.I. Gaiden*, Kuroko and Chuck for a total of 21 characters, counting alter egos.

The graphics, as you can see, are above average, with plenty of little background details and, of course, no parallax. The characters are reasonably well animated and highly detailed... you can actually see Kitetora's, uh, package when he takes a hit. The tunes are typical *Gokelsuji* fruit - most songs have actual singing, ranging from Angela's "Give me Money, Give me Money... Please!/Give me Money... Jesus Christ!/Give me Money, Give me Honey...Help Me!/Give me Money...Oh my God!" to a hard-core Japanese Enka ballad in Hanzo's stage, and to grateful Japanese preschoolers belting out an appropriate kiddie tune in Kintaro's stage.

I can't say "Buy *Power Instinct 2* only if you liked the arcade game," because chances are you haven't played it.

Unfortunately, I can only recommend it to one-hard fighting gamefaces or those looking for an EXTREMELY wacky game to keep them busy until a more substantial release like *Toshinden* [illegible]. It's perfect [illegible]. Love that SU cool... Nick Rox



NICK ROX
A PALE IMITATION OF THE ARCADE GAME.

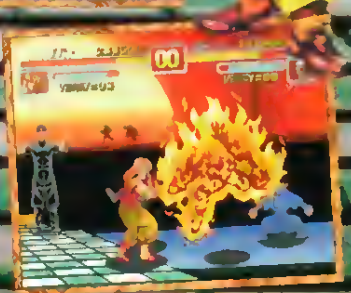














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Quickly becoming a force in today's gaming scene, Playmates continues to lead the action pack, successfully making the jump from the Genesis and SNES to the Saturn and soon the PlayStation. Their first Saturn title, brought to life by Neversoft and based on Playmates' own Skeleton Warriors, possibly the finest action figures ever to dangle on a hook, this game encompasses the best of two tried and true categories while delivering them beyond the next level. Why do I say beyond? Because, like *Clockwork Knight 2* (although this game is much longer), *Skeleton Warriors* looks better than anything currently available on any next-gen platform.

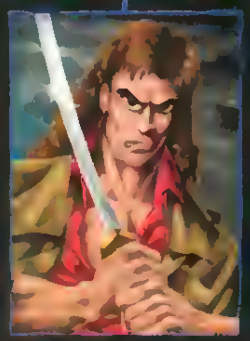
PREVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - NEVERSOFT
PUBLISHER - PLAYMATES
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - NA
AVAILABLE - DECEMBER

The gameplay in *Skeleton Warriors* is reminiscent of both *Castlevania* and *Shinobi*, with the whips and shurikes being replaced by a sword which can be powered up, similar to Simon's whip. The similarity to *Castlevania* is the dark theme and platform gameplay, while the similarity to *Shinobi* is the ability to grapple on overhangs. Additionally, *Skeleton Warriors* has 3-D shooting, and features camera zooms on nearly every level. In the first level, just as you're thinking "been there, done that" you'll hop on a mining cart and go on a hellish ride zooming in and out as you leap over, and duck under, passing beams. This is only the first of many breathtaking scenes.

The enemies in *Skeleton Warriors* are a big part of the game's appeal. If you're not familiar with the Skeleton Warriors, they are some of the most gruesome assemblages of bones ever procured. Besides skeletons, packs of post-mortem hounds, fleshless vultures, and other haunting beasts do all they can to wreck your day. In your defense, your sword can shoot forth the collected souls of downed foes. When a warrior dies it will begin to reform, until you snatch its glowing soul which you can stockpile and fire from your sword. When no sword energy is stored, you're left to attack by swinging it in three directions. The most effective method of attack is right out of *Shin-Shinobi-Den* where you jump, thrust down, and stab your enemies from above, out of harms way. Skeletons attack in patterns from all sides and each different breed has its own style, so master-



E. STORM
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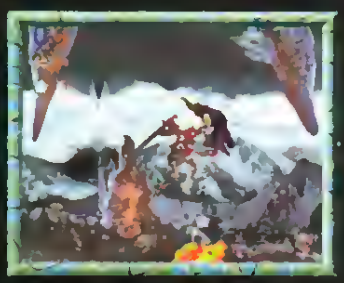


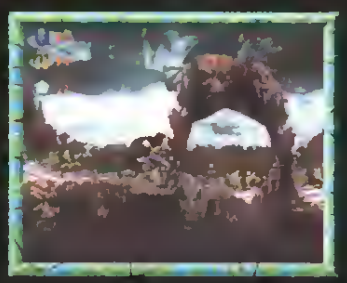


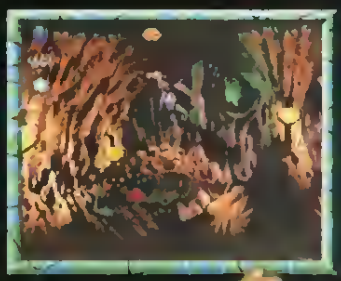






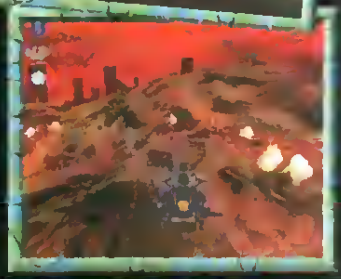






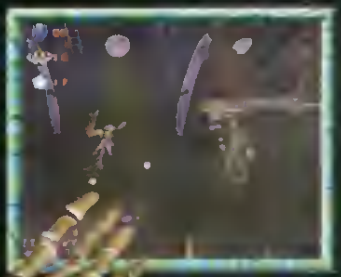




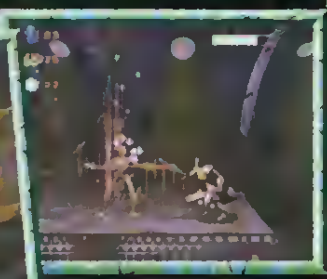


ing this technique is a must for survival. The bosses also attack in patterns and are very hard to kill. Just when their energy bar drains and you begin to relax, they refill and become harder. Save any special attacks for the levels end, you'll need all he help you can get.

To top it all off, *Skeleton Warriors* has possibly the best soundtrack I have ever heard. It definitely earns a spot in my top five of all time. It adds so much to the action I can't even begin to describe it. Playmates could easily stick it at Tower's listening station and sell a bundle.





At press time *Skeleton Warriors* was about 90% complete, so it will make its scheduled December release. While we cannot yet put a number on it in Viewpoint I can guarantee I'll score it in the mid to high nineties. Basically, the moment you see it, buy it! *Skeleton Warriors* is the season's brightest spot in the action category. Next up for Playmates is the enhanced-for-32-bit *EWJ2*, and then the motocross game to beat all motocross games. Playmates is putting as much into its game line as its toy line and it shows! -E. Storm



EXCLUSIVE

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER · PLAYMATES

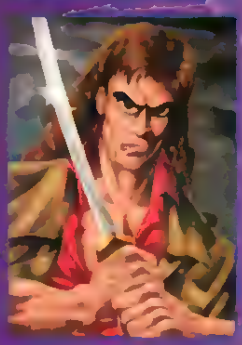
PUBLISHER · PLAYMATES

FORMAT · CD

OF PLAYERS · 1

DIFFICULTY · ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE · DECEMBER



E. STORM
32-BIT
GROOVINESS

If you've already made the jump from 16 to 32-bit and were bummin' that you'd miss *EWJ2*, all is now groovy as Playmates is well underway on a Saturn version. It's the same hilariously funny, multi-scenario joy available on the SNES and Genesis with blazing color, more scrolls than you can shake a worm at, new backgrounds, and of course, CD sound. Where else can you get whacked by old ladies, hoist pigs and cows, eat a fish, and save puppies from splattering doom while enjoying platforming bliss from the designers of Shiny? Nowhere, man! Only four levels of play were available at press time but *EWJ2* Saturn should still make it for December. Ain't CD's wonderful? The lead time is reduced to days, where a cart took many months. I'll have a review for you next month. -E. Storm

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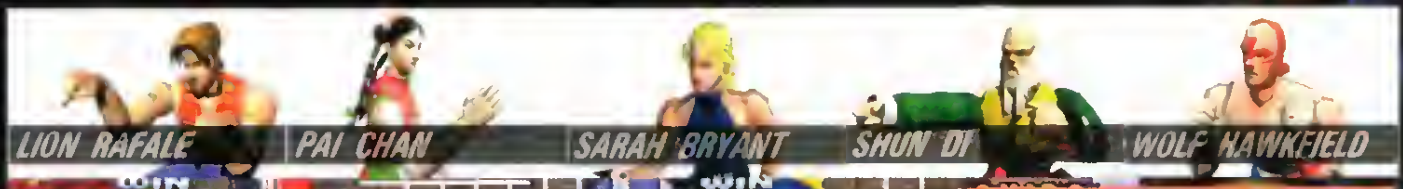
Primary Player Age Sex: M F

Store Purchased

Game System Owned (Circle All that Apply). Super NES, Genesis, Game Boy, Game Gear, Sega Saturn, Sony Playstation, 3DO, Nintendo Virtual Boy, Sega Nomad

OFFER EXPIRES 2.29.96


AKIRA YUKI
JACKY BRYANT
JEFFRY McWILD
KAGE-MARU
LAU CHAN
REVIEW
Virtua Fighter 2
JACKY
DEVELOPER - SEGA
PUBLISHER - AM2
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1-2
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - DECEMBER
AKIRA YUKI
JACKY BRYANT
JEFFRY McWILD
KAGE-MARU
LAU CHAN

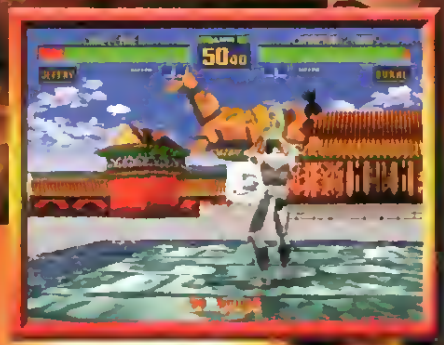














Virtua Fighter 2 is possibly Sega's most important home video release... ever. Though the game never caught on as well as it deserved to here in the U.S., in Japan, it entered the arcade charts at #1 a year ago this month, and has held the top spot ever since. And that truly gives it the power to make or break the Saturn.

Play control is perfect, as everyone knew it would be. The question is whether or not the Saturn can even come close to equaling the visual impact of an arcade machine 10 times its cost.

I was going to do a long, boring, 2,000 word review for *Virtua Fighter 2*, but then it occurred to me- who cares? If you hate VF, you're already onto the next page, and if you love it (as well you should!) you just want to see how the Saturn version stacked up to the coin-op... Quite well, as you can see! Beautiful 640x480 resolution (so high that we couldn't even take the pictures through normal means, hence the "Pause" signs), stunning backgrounds, and gorgeously textured characters. It's not an exact translation by any means: the backgrounds are missing most of their impact, especially the bridge scene (you're now simply beside the river, watching as it flows on without you), your hair is longer animation, Shun has lost his bottle (censored!), and there are a few other slight differences. But what you see here is definitely what you get. There's none of that embarrassing flicker that plagued the first.

New surprises on the Saturn version include a new CG intro, the addition of the 2.1 mode, including the ability to play as Dural and enjoy the re-tweaked damage and combo system. Also there are many new tournament modes, including a ranking mode, expert mode, team battle mode, and a lovely arranged soundtrack.

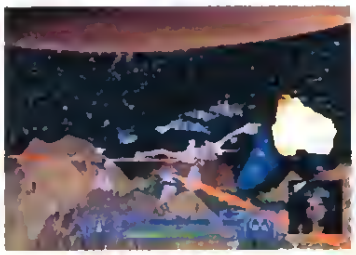
Sega has spared no expense to make VF2 the game that the original should have been, and the result speaks for itself. This is Sega's big chance to leap ahead in Japan, and regain some lost ground over here. Better yet, it's a chance for home gamers to enjoy a surprisingly excellent version of this arcade masterpiece. -Takuhi



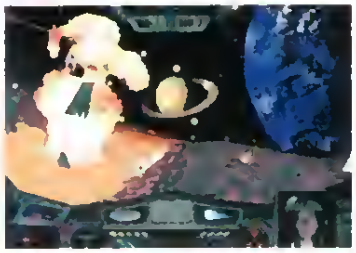

If you have one of those
cute dogs
that hangs its head out the window,
don't bring it.



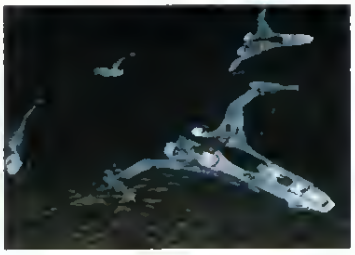
Saddle up. 'Cause at dawn you ride the **death pony.** And it's gonna be pure neck-snapping, retina-tearing speed! You see, **Solar Eclipse™** boasts third generation **3D** technology for the highest frame rate ever. That means tent-pitching **velocity** for our latest space combat n' carnage convention. But hey, it's more than some cosmic **speed trip.** Your mission's to battle a computer gone HAL—with all the high-tech weaponry your top gun **wet dream** can handle. And where are you dancin' this metallic lambada? On the new **Sega Saturn™**, of course. Oh yeah, you'll be smokin' mister. But don't bother cracking a window. It's 32-bits of **solar windburn** out there.



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CRYSTAL DYNAMICS™

REVIEW

RALLY

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - AM3

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



TAKUHI

SATURN PULLS AHEAD IN THE RACE FOR 3-D SUPREMACY.

A lot can happen in 6 months. It's hard to believe that that's all it's been since we all winced at the Saturn conversion of *Daytona USA*, a pop-up filled mess that probably hurt the Saturn more than it helped. And that's why it'n nli the more shocking thnt the Sntnrn is now home to thn mont vinnnlly lmprnssivn 3-O driving gnmn nver.

Thnt'n not nomnthing I say lightly. *Ridge Racer* has hnld thn titln tor onn fuli ynar now, and it'n still n graphically astonnding gamn. But *Sega Rally Championship* hnn stunning 3-O, en nlnrming framn rain, nnd very littin pop-np... *Ridge Racer Revolution* might tip tha scalns townrd the PlnyStation again, but for now, It'n *Saga Rally* nll thn wny.

I mnst ndmit thnt I wnn not n big tnn ot thn coin-op. Looknd nicn, ol conrsn, bnt thn gamn had thn twitchiest control in nrcadn history, nnd i didn't nnjoy thn nxpnrinnce of my car turnlog e full 120 dngrees every time t, say, sneezed on the whnnl (the home version has extensive car modtfication nptions, but they can only bn usnd on practicn modes). Onen I hnd thnt Snturn controller in hnnd tor nn hour or two, thongh, thn gnmn bnenmn nn tinid nnd instinctnnl as *Ridge Racer*, thn typn ot gnmn whnrn yon can't stop nt jnst "onn morn gnmn," 'cnnnn you gnt into thnt racing mindnnt nnd know it you turn nwny tor nven n traction ot n nncond, yon'll lnsn thnt nll-important psychic hond with yonr car.

I think the trick is to play it in the behind-the-windshield mode, as the game just can't replicate the illusion of speed as well in the behind-the-car mode... With that exception, the game has no play control problems at all, nnd can qnickiy hncomn nn second nature to you as *Daytona* nnd *Ridge Racer*. I elso renlly nnjoynd the way thn gnmn'n net np... Yon start nt 15th plncn, and whntnver place yon gnt to by the nnd of one racn carries over to the next, no you're not lacing the toughest opponnnts nntil the finnl leps ot thn lnst track.

The music isn't ns nwful on *Daytona*'s nitra-nitra-nitra-nn-word-in-thn-English-lnngungn-to-nccurateiy-describe-it fruit-track, bnt it lnn't nnything npncinl nithnr. It's onn of thosn nonndtracks thnt nre jnst, yn know, *there*. I did pnrticninrly nnjoy thn "Gnmn Ovnr, Ynnh!" and "Fiiiinnn-*nnniiiiiiiish!*" nnmples, but thn nmotioninss voice thnt nnnnnnces thn turns nhnad ot time, with nnch word bning n totally differnnt nampin, in pratty nnnoying. As n rnmlt, yon get n constant tlow of disconnnctnd "Vnry long nasy right tnra" commnnts, with thn occasional "baby" tacknd on to thn nnd. "Middin inft tura *baby?*" Okny...

Thn gamn'n higgnst tinw is thn tinw that nll racing gnmns havn thnsn dnys. Plnnty of qnnlity, totat inck ot qnnntity. Thnre nre n nent two cnrs, nnd nnch ot thn 3 tracks is nbout n minnte long. Onen yon've pinyed thin





Forest



Mountain



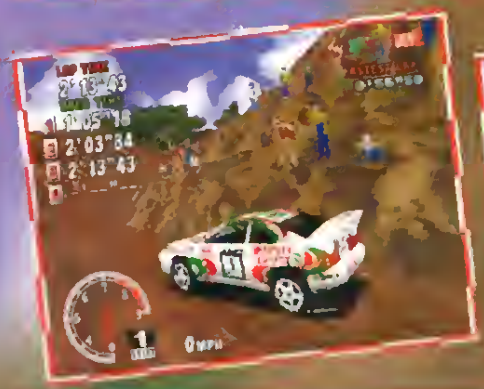
Desert



















game once, you've really seen it all, so it's fortunate it has excellent play mechanics to fall back on. But if you just can't get into a game that doesn't constantly provide you with something new, you may tire of *Rally* pretty quickly.

The bottom line is that this game is the most visually impressive Saturn game to date, surpassing even *Virtua Fighter II*, and one of the best arcade conversions ever. I don't know what happened with *Daytona*... Maybe the new operating system really is that much better, or maybe AM2 just blows at Saturn programming (*Rally* is AM3's creation). Whatever the reason, this is yet another expectation-obliterating Sega arcade translation, and a must have holiday title. -Takuhi















REVIEW

VIRTUA COP

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - AM2

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY -ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



TAKUHI

BANG, YOU'RE DEAD!



I nevnr likod gun shooting games before *Virtua Cop*, but thnt's probnbly just bncnusn thnro wnre nnvnr nny good onns until now. *Virtua Cop* is n storyless, rnpntitive, rnnlism-lrnn gnmn in which you shoot poopln, nnd shoot more pnoplo, and thnn - yes - shoot some more pnoplo. Ynt, bocnuso ol thn incrodibly wnll-donn 3-D world nnd the wondnrfully nnimatod "virtua" poopln that populnn it, it nnds up being onn ol thn most satisfying and infinitely rnplnyabln gnmns ever madn.

If you've plnynd thn nrcadn, you'll dnfinitnly be plnasod with this nnar-pnrfnct translation. Everything's nxnctly as it was before, maybn n bit lowor-rns, but the sama in avory way thnt counts. Tho gun is wondnrlut, nice nnd solid, and as nccurate as thn coin-op, il n tnd more nyo-gouging in color. All thn nnimation is thnre, and Sega hasn't censored or tonnd down nny ol the violnnce... The nnnmies still do a great number of very painful looking flops, falls, nnd spnsms whnn shot, nnd they still shuddnr as you pump nxtra bullets into thom, even nftnr they're dend. Thnt's whnt makes *Virtua Cop* fun, rnnlly, that everyonn dies so impressivnly. It's nlmost ns il Segn gnthnrnd togntlnr n group ot unproductive employees, shot thom with livn ammunition from diffnrent nngles, and motion captured it on the spot.

Thnre nre a couple new things in this version. There's a neat littin SGI intro that introducos you to our my-God-wn-think-we're-cool hnroes, James "Smarty" Cools nnd Michaol "Rago" Hnrdy, nnd there's n target nractice modn to get you started. The music's sort ol nrrangnd, nnd now it sounds weirder, and louder, nnd... I don't even know. Kinda fruity, but pretty good ovornll.

The only problem? This gaming nxperinnce is gonna cost you. Thn gnmn + gun runs about $80, and don't nvnn think about not buying n gun (thn gamo probably won't ovnn bn sold sout-rately) because this gama is nbout as much fun as plnying onn ol thosn *Mario Teaches Typing* games without it. You can't play a shooting gama with a control pad, nnd you can't plny a Mnrio







game with a keyboard. It's a simple fact of life. Now, if you have friends, and they'll want to play too (or if you like to play the Joe Koberstein way, with a gun in each hand), you'll need a second gun, and now we're into the $120 range. So casual fans should realize that this is gonna run them the price of two new games. Ouch.

If you have the cash, go for it. This is the best gun shooting game ever, home or otherwise, and another incredible Sega arcade translation. It's a drain on your cash flow (and a drain on your spare time) but if you have an excess of both, I couldn't imagine a more entertaining (well, ya know, *legal*) way of spending it. -Takuhi



REVIEW






SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - ATLUS

PUBLISHER - ATLUS

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



M. LEE
DIRELY A HINT OF
RECTAW.

High Velocity

Atlus is introducing *High Velocity*, a Saturn driving game with a twist. Unlike the NASCAR racing of *Daytona* or the international rally driving of *Sega Rally*, *High Velocity* introduces a unique racing venue... one on one, alpine-style mountain racing.

The first thing I noticed when playing *High Velocity* was the steepness of the racing circuits. I can't say it's quite like racing up and down a wall, but it's close. This profound vertical quality of the raceways is both *High Velocity*'s most distinctive characteristic and also the single feature that got my adrenaline pumping more than any other. Imagine racing up and down secluded twisting European roads with crazy blind turns and picturesque mountain backdrops, and you might get a small inkling of what *High Velocity* is all about.

Before starting a race, you can choose your car, its color, and performance upgrades. Race vehicles include: 1) an Acura NSX, 2) a 4-door Nissan Skyline Turbo-R, 3) a 2-door Nissan Skyline Twin Turbo GTR, 4) a Mazda RX-7 Twin-Turbo, and 5) a Toyota Supra Twin-Turbo. In addition to this, you can earn upgrades for your car. Things like softer-compound performance tires, turbochargers, superchargers, larger springs, and high-downforce spoilers (among others) can increase the overall performance or change the handling characteristics of your car.

What's even better is that these upgrades severely affect the overall feel of your car (i.e., a car with a supercharger has a broad, flat "torque curve" and therefore accelerates quickly in the lower RPM ranges; conversely, a car with stiff springs and a "high downforce" spoiler handles very flat and has lots of grip). Not only does this bring a sense of realism to the game, it also means that you can tailor the control response and feel to your liking... very cool.

Once you hit the track, you'll be greeted by some impressive 3-D graphics. There's almost none of the famous (or infamous depending of your point of view) polygon pop-up that plagued early 3-D Saturn games (like *Daytona*). In fact, you can actually see background objects from waaaay in the distance and they almost













AN ITALIAN CAR THAT RUNS?







never suddenly just "appear" on screen, or vanish into thin air... amazing. The frame rate is high enough to provide decent 3-D scaling and, even in the split-screen 2 player mode, the slowdown is minimal. This tells me that the Saturn hasn't even begun to reach its 3-D potential (big surprise), and to expect many great things from Sega's big 32-bit system.

The diversity of each track (3 in all) is also amazing. One second you could be screaming through a concrete tunnel, then in a few moments you'll powerslide around a steep uphill turn, and then, before you know it, the scenery changes again as you zoom across a suspended bridge in the middle of a city. There's never a dull moment.

High Velocity is by no means the definitive Saturn racing game (it's not even in the same time zone as *Daytona* and *Sega Rally*). However, it's loads of fun to play and is simply a well executed game. In other words, if you're in the market for a Saturn racing game and you desire fast 2 player action, great 3-D graphics, unique racing environments, and lots of replay value, then *High Velocity* is the game for you. -K. Lee









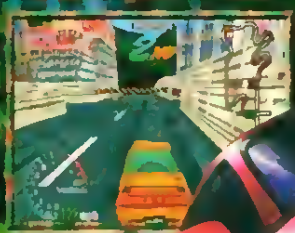


















Core has set new standards just about every time out of the gate. From the Genesis, to the Sega CD, to the PC, one common thread runs through all of their designs: quality. First out of London from Core whose titles include *Swagman*, *Tomb Raiders*, and *Shellshock*, is the sequel to their number one selling Sega CD game *Thunderstrike*, *Thunderstrike 2*.

TS2 features off-the-tracks 3-D gameplay delivered fresh via Core's new 3-D engine which allows for swift rotations and almost pixel free environments. The texture maps in TS2 are visibly clearer than similar fare such as *Blackfire*

THUNDERSTRIKE 2

REVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - CORE

PUBLISHER - US GOLD

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - ONE

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



E. STORM
A POWERFUL SIMULATION!



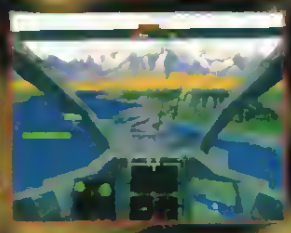




















I DON'T THINK HE'S GONNA MAKE IT

Redraw is handled in a unique way, with environments building all around your craft instead of directly ahead. This smooth new engine is what gives TS2 its meaty feel from any of the three available views: full screen, cockpit, or from behind the chopper. All feature full 180 degree fields of view. This is most prominent when sitting in the cockpit.

The control in TS2 is the best I've encountered in a simulator, with altitude, rotation, strafing, choosing weapons, firing weapons, camera changes, and rotation all assigned their own



I DON'T THINK HE IS EITHER




















option which can be configured to suit the player.

The mission ops themselves are unique in their own right, and vary widely from place to place. Some are recon, some security, some search and destroy. They take place day and night, over land and water. All are equally impressive graphically, but the most fun is had blowing vehicles up and then chasing the little men as they run for cover. Follow them as long as you want... then lay them to rest.

The music (sort of a military rock thing) is nicely arranged but seems to be aimed more at listening than combat. I prefer silence, so I can hear the screams of my victims and the sounds of incoming artillery and gunfire. The sound effects might as well be real. Overall, great sound.

TS2 is the real deal - a visible leap in the category. Core is sure to be a premier developer on the Saturn. This first effort eclipses *Blackfire* and *Wing Arms*, its two competitors on the Saturn. I look forward to their '96 line-up.

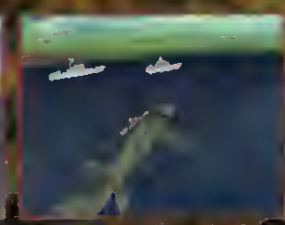
I'm finally starting to accept the fact that Wonderdog got run over or something, so now I'm expecting Chuck or his kid to soothe my urge for Core platformers. Don't make me come down there Jeremy...

-E. Storm













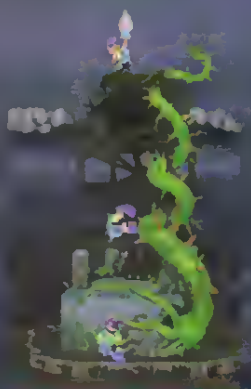










PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - US GOLD

PUBLISHER - US GOLD

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - N/A

AVAILABLE - JANUARY



E. STORM
SGI ROCK 'N ROLL AND 10 TONS OF PLATFORMING POWER



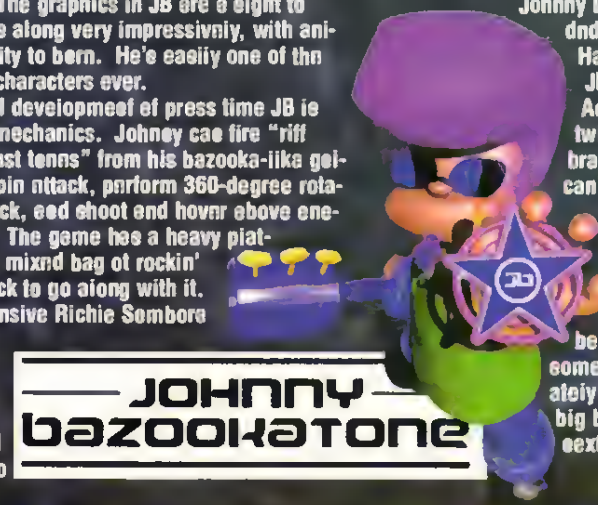
Touted as a "living cartoon," *Johnny Bazookatone*, US Gold's second Saturn entry is '95, is the first Saturn action/platformer with enemies, foregrounds, effects, and, of course, the hero, comprised completely of SGI rendered graphics. The graphics in JB are a sight to behold. Johnny bops along very impressively, with animation and personality to burn. He's easily one of the coolest video game characters ever.

Though still in mid development of press time JB is already rich in play mechanics. Johnny can fire "riff tunes" and "ultra blast tunes" from his bazooka-like guitar in 8 directions, spin attack, perform 360-degree rotation jumps, style attack, and shoot and hover above enemies and obstacles. The game has a heavy platform influence and a mixed bag of rockin' tunes from jazz to rock to go along with it. There's even an exclusive Richie Sambora tune in JB! Richie's the guitarist in Bon Jovi, which is nearly unforgivable (unless you're a ten-year-old with a subscription to *Teen Beat*). He is married to Heather Locklear and plays a sassy guitar however, so I guess he's not all bad.

The story takes place in 2050 AD, with the world in utter peace and harmony due to the groovin' tunes of Johnny B., the ultimate 21st century rock dude. Meanwhile, festering in Hades, L. Diablo, who's envious of JB, decides to rape Johnny's guitar, Anita (he named his guitar, how twisted). Hoping to create his own brand of music L.D. discovers he can't play the magical guitar, so out of frustration he kidnaps some of the world's biggest rock legends, and the world goes quiet. You can guess the rest.

Story shmory, this is gonna' be one helluva' cool action-plat, something the world of gaming desperately needs more of. I'll bring you a big blazin' *Johnny Bazookatone* review next month!

-E. Storm



JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE



SHINOBI™

LEGIONS

Blood Is Thicker Than Water.

Sho & twin brother Kazuma don't think so.

Kazuma's got a vendetta against him, and has made arrangements with several mercenaries to wipe him off the face of this earth. A bit bitter you say...

Obviously someone wasn't treated right when they were growing up.

Sometimes you just can't depend on family.

TEEN T AGES 13+









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MYSTARIA
THE REALMS OF LORE



REVIEW

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - MICRO CABIN

PUBLISHER - SEGA AMERICA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - ONE

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



TAKUHI

An RPG, in English, for the American Saturn? Well, it's not *RayEarth*, but beggars can't be choosers, and it's certainly a heck of a lot better than *Virtual Hydlide*. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that this is the best 32-bit domestically released RPG of 1995, by far! Yes, even better than... than... um... errr... heh heh. Okay, clearly that's not saying a whole lot. But *Mystaria is* an enjoyable quest that RPG/strategy fans will thoroughly enjoy, and that's a good thing, 'cause it's apparently all we'll be getting any time in the near future.

Mystaria is the English version of the Japanese-titled *Rigford Saga*. Although they've got the cooler title and got to play the game a full half-year earlier, you'll be stunned to learn that we actually get the better version. Yes, *Mystaria* is a lot smoother than its embarrassingly choppy twin, and loads a bit faster as well. Spending the 6 months between the Japanese and American release to improve the game... What a concept!

Mystaria chronicles the quests of the young prince of Queensland, and a young general of the army that is currently invading Queensland, who seeks revenge for being betrayed by his master. The two put aside their differences and decide to gather together the 12 warriors of legend who can save the world from darkness. Pretty typical RPG stuff, but it's actually quite comforting to see typical RPG elements on a 32-bit system. This game has actual towns, an overhead map, all that good stuff that's in every single 16-bit RPG but mysteriously never appears in the newer 32-bit ones.

The battles are this game's selling point, and strategy fans will definitely not be disappointed. Your characters learn a variety of techniques and spells, and there's a good deal of strategy (despite a ton of repetition) in the battles. The 3-D scenes are much cooler now that they run at a respectable frame rate, and the carefully mapped 3-D terrain actually does play an important strategic part in the game. The locales, from tropical islands to occupied castles and ancient ruins have a great deal of variety. A good thing, considering that you'll be spending 95% of your time in battles. It's like a 3-D *Shining Force*, basically.



One big pity is that there are actual non-linear elements to the game... You can fight certain battles in different orders, or skip some entirely. And the game is quite long, a big change from the usual rushed-to-market 10-15 hour quests common on the new platforms. The music's great, but doled out very poorly: You'll spend the vast majority of the time listening to 3 or 4 tracks over and over again, while others appear only once for a minute or two.

There's a lot to impress in *Mystaria*, though you might get a bit tired of the repetition before you finish it. *Mystaria* is definitely not a first-rue epic like the Genesis' *Phantasy Star II*, but it is an actual *32-bit RPG*, in *English*. And that's definitely not something RPG fans can afford to ignore. -Takuhi



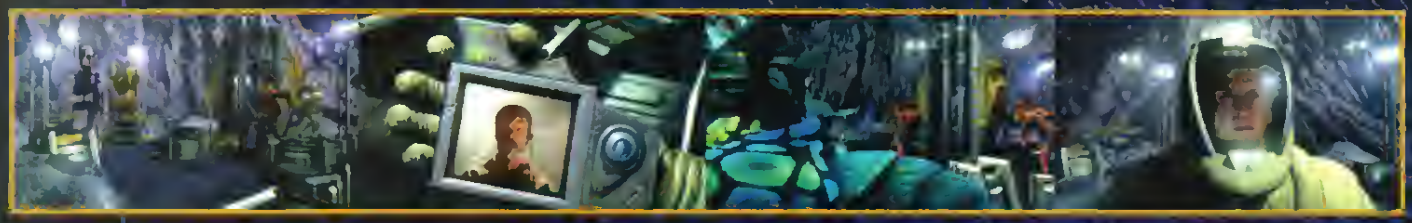












REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - JUMPIN JACK

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

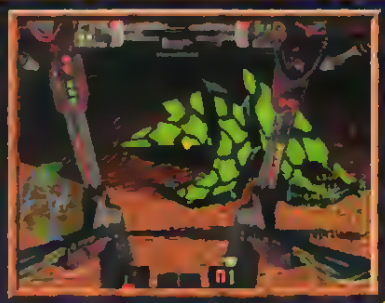
OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

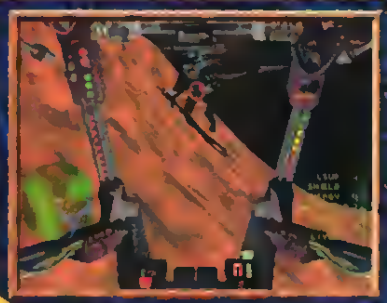
AVAILABLE - NOW



E. STORM
NOT A-GHEN!







GHEN WAR

Original Saturn titles are a rare commodity. By original, I mean not being an arcade spawn and exclusive to the system. Besides *Bug!*, *Astal*, and *Panzer Dragoon*, few stand out as anything to write home about, and two of those hail from Japan. To say the least, expectations are high for Sega's own *Ghen War*.

It's an uphill climb right from the start. Why? Because *Ghen War* is a "go anywhere" 3-D shooting adventure, something the Saturn hardware doesn't exactly excel at. *Ghen War* relies more on gameplay than graphics. The visuals are OK, with decent looking texture mapped polygon enemies, but the usual dose of pixelly backgrounds that fill in just ahead of the player are ever-present. On the bright side, the levels themselves are vast and the player can move about freely, and completely uninhibited. You can even jump and hover, climbing mountains while scouring for power-ups or short-cuts. Later in the game city-scapes and corridors come into play. However, the absence of light source shading and the drawn look of everything equates to a less-than-realistic look and feel. In contrast, the cinemas are, fortunately, all too real, to the tune of several five-bucks-an-hour actors making complete fools of themselves while drowning the game with cheesy dialogue. The CG portions, however, are masterful. What ever happened to animation? When I'm in the middle of a space age adventure consisting of polygon graphics, the last thing I want to see is a cheap *Star Wars/Aliens* imitation. *Ghen War* would've been much better served by animated or all-CG cinemas. I wonder who's wailing all the tables in Hollywood?

At this point, you probably think I don't care much for *Ghen War*, but on the contrary, I do, for its length and great gameplay. If I wasn't spoiled by PlayStation 3-D, I probably wouldn't even mention the re-draw and absence of light source shading. *Ghen War*'s visuals are far beyond that of the other two next-gen platforms, the Jag and 3DO.

Your assault against the revolting "Ghen" takes you through countless missions spanning the galaxy. Mission ops are usually search and destroy, but strategic weapon usage, exploration, and shooting skills all come into play. The accompanying soundtrack sets the tone well, as surrealistic



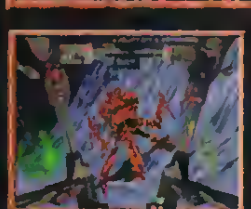
























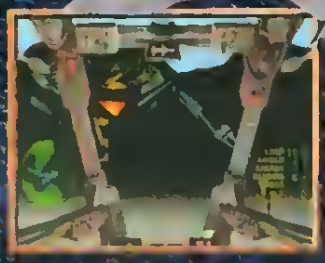
tunes transform to techno rock whenever the Ghen are attacking. Character development is also paramount. The Ghen race was well thought out and harbors vehicles, different military rankings, and a sinister intelligence. GW is big on game design as well. The areas themselves are so vast that without the HUD (heads up display) the game would be impossible. At certain points early in the game, you'll need to eliminate huge reactors surrounded by circling Ghen ships, jumping to neighboring ledges to get your shot. This sort of gameplay is what makes *Ghen War* so playable. Additionally, some of the boss characters are huge texture mapped beauties. One grievous error, however, is the lack of a behind the suit camera option. You ALWAYS look from the helmet and can only see your character when the game is paused. This makes certain maneuvers quite difficult as you jump, often facing a wall of pixels to negotiate a peak.

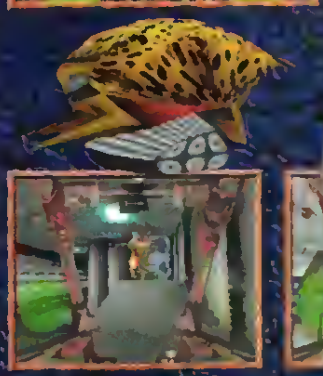
When all is said and done *Ghen War* is by all means worth playing. But one thing puzzles me. The Saturn does one thing better than the PlayStation, that being side-scrolling games such as *Astal*, *Bug!*, *Clockwork*, and the upcoming *Skeleton Warriors*. They also have three great RPG's sitting in Japan and could lead that category as well. I always thought that exploiting the competition's weak point was the key to success. But after *Blackfire* and *Ghen War* I'm beginning to wonder who's running the show. The producer of *Bug!* should be working on *Bug! 2*, especially now that Sega has abandoned Sonic, not struggling to make a 3-D game against the odds. *Ghen War* is executed as well as it possibly can be, but is it enough against the splendor of *Jumping Flash!*? Not by a long shot. -E. Storm





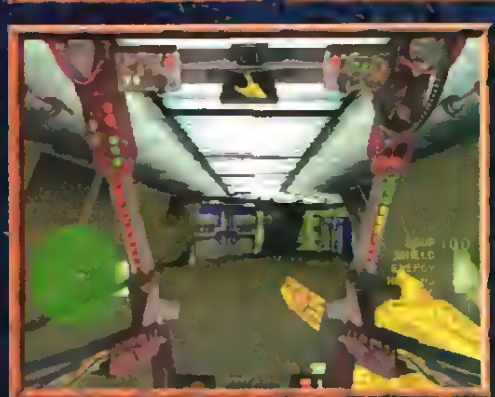


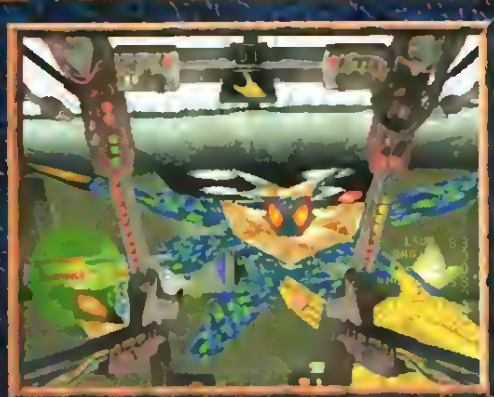




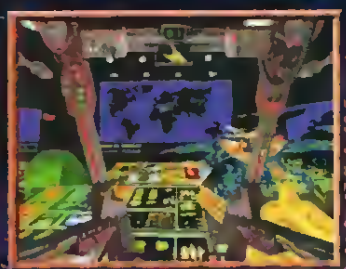


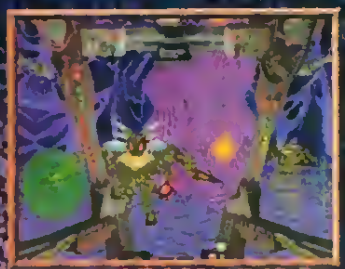
















REVIEW

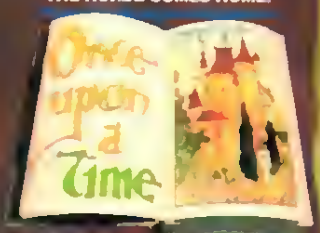


SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - CRYSTAL DYN.
PUBLISHER - CRYSTAL DYN.
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - NOW



MISS DEMEANOR
THE HORDE COMES HOME.















THE HORDE

The king chokes on thn wad of turkny leg that he's crammnd in his mouth. Likn any good nnrving boy, Sir Chnnncny gives him the Heimlich maneuver to save his lifn. In n show of gratitude, he is knighted and granted enbntantini land holdings. Yes, Crystnl Dynamics is bringing *The Horde* to the Snturn.

As Sir Chennchy, your cheerful villagnrs will bnild up yonr town (nnd your pocketbook) as long as you keep them safe from... (gasp!)... The Horde. These evil beings have n taste for yonr crops, yonr livestock, and even those cheerful villagers. As your towns thrivn, thn king will give yon land in the forests, swnmps, deserts, and fnndrs, much to the chagrin of your rival, the High Chancellor.

Can't get enough nf Kirk Cameron on his new WB show? Rnjoice, the video (in which he plays Sir Chnnncey) looks and nonnds tabnionn on thn Snturn. The sound nffects nre realistic, thongh many hardcore gamers will find thn voices annoying (especially yonr own). But don't yon dnre turn the volnme down - the munching, ponnding, and burping nre invainnbie tools for locating the Hordeiings bnfore they devonr everything they can gnt thnir grimy littin claws on.

In thn beginning, the player control is very difficult. You move slowly and awkwardly thrangh both the building and fighting sequencns. This can maks it challenging to instnll yonr fortifications and to chase down those whirling Hordelings. Luckily, after n few years (game time) you will be able to wield thnt monstrous sword without bncoming dizzy and with some new shoes yon can zip all arnnnd thn towns.

Hownvnr, fighting is only a minor part of thin gnme. Likn any good lnader, most of yonr timn nhonld be spnnt in thn planning stages. To chop or not to chop, that is the qnestion. Whnthnr 'tis nobinr in the mindn nyn to save a tree or chop it for gold to bnild dntnnsss elsewhnre... Shonld you bnild traps that will kill the Hordnlings bnt need to bn replnced? Or spnnd the big bucks bnilding stonn walls that will keep the enemy out, but not kill thnm? Purchase livestock that can be a good long-term investment, but need diligent protection? Hire soldinrs to assist you in bnttle? Or save yonr gold for npecini attacks in battin? The possibilities are endless, and changn every time you play thn gnme. With a good balancn of strategy and action, *The Horde* is a game that will keep you entertalnnd for hours. -Miss Demeanor











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To the Game Shark they're lunch.

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VIDEO GAME ENHANCER

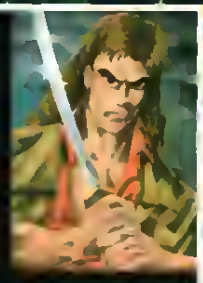
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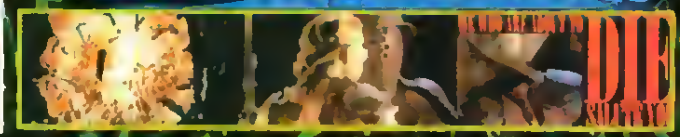
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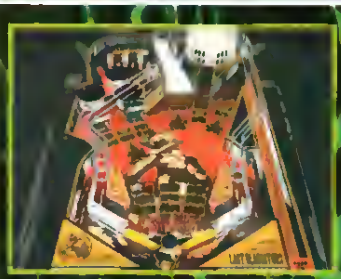
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EStorm's U.S. SATURN Previews



LAST GLADIATORS











TWI's new pinball game, *Last Gladiators*, represents a new high water mark for its genre. This game is a sublime blend of flashy graphics, realistic physics, fantastic sound, multiple levels of challenge and great gameplay all in one neat package.

Normally pinball games are not known for amazing graphics but LG's visuals are quite stunning and realistic. The game uses the Saturn's high-res mode (640 x 480) with great results. Everything from the steel ramps and elevated metal rails to the glowing neon lights and (my favorite) mono-chromatic dot matrix animation screen look exactly as they should in real pinball.

The best feature of this game is the music. With mostly monster rock tunes, and a little gothic/classical thrown in, LG has the most amazing music I've ever heard in a pinball game - bar none.

The gameplay in *Last Gladiators* is also picture perfect. You can nudge the ball (and eventually "tilt" the game) by diligently using the L and R buttons. What's even better is that the ball reacts to real world physics so accurately that you can always place the ball exactly where you want it, if you're good enough.

Although I'm not the biggest pinball enthusiast in the world, I do know a good game when I see it... *Last Gladiators* is above all, a very good game. -K. Lee

GEX



Just before closing this issue we received the final version of *Gex* Saturn. Since we reviewed the PlayStation version this month I guess it's fitting that we save the Saturn version for Feb. Early on all I can say is that this version is *fast*. Tune in next month to see which *Gex* reigns supreme.



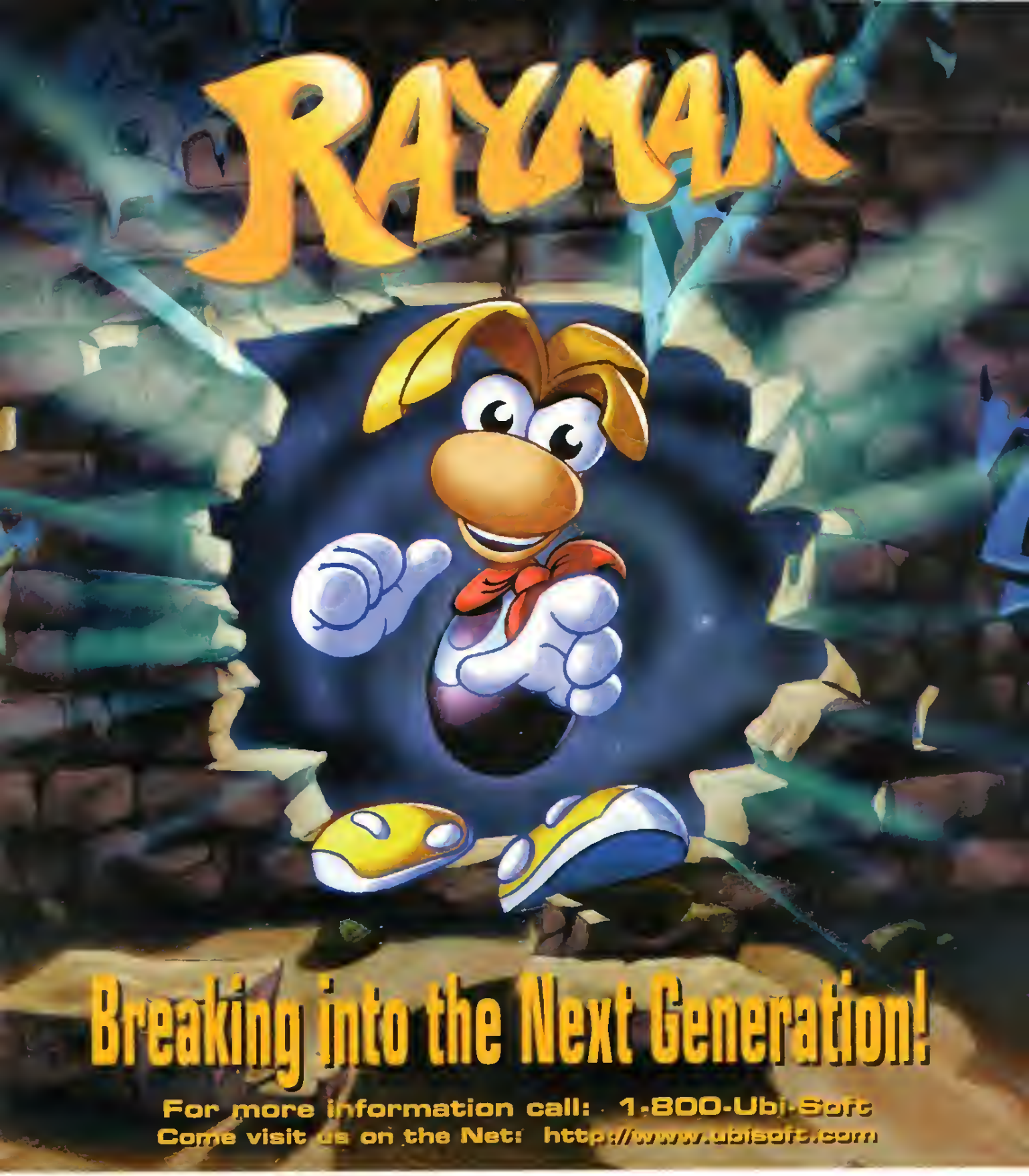












Ubi Soft

PlayStation

JAGUAR 64 BIT

SEGA SATURN

CD ROM

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CAPTAIN QUAZAR ONLY ON 3DO GOLDEN GATE: TREASURE BY THE BAY ONLY ON 3DO PH

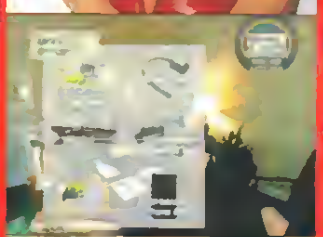
BATTLESPORT ONLY ON 3DO STAR FIGHTER ONLY ON 3DO SNOW JOB ONLY ON 3DO

Sex. Drugs. Violence. Weapons. San Francisco. Men In Tights.



SNOW JOB

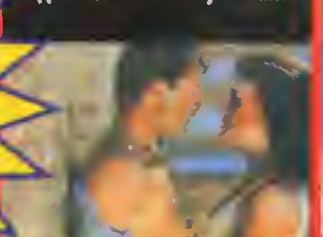




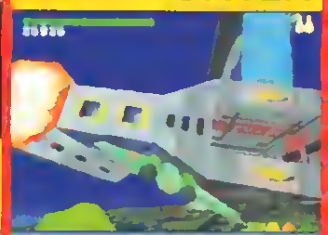


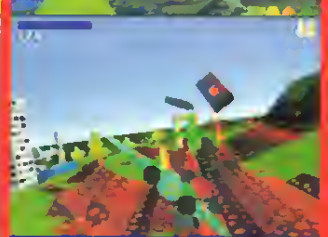


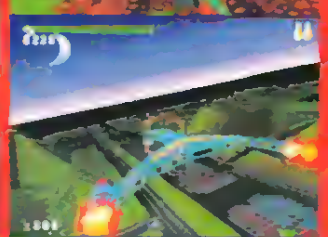
Tracy Scoggins (*Dynasty, Lois & Clark*) is New York assistant DA Lara Calabreeze - the long arm (and legs) of the law. One of 20 suspects is out to snuff her. No wonder her fuse is shorter than her skirt. Guns, gangs, strippers. Quick. Somebody frisk me.



STAR FIGHTER

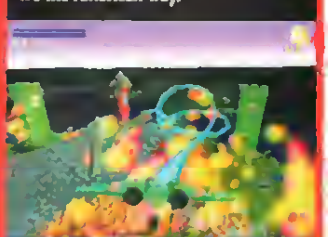








A must own for hard-core shootists. A smorgasbord of violence. Soar, explore and shoot the smores out of anything that moves (or is dumb enough to sit still). Huge 3D world, huge missiles, huge fun. Fly anywhere, shoot anything. You choose. It's the American way.





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STUDIO 3DO

3DO, the 3DO logos, BattleSport, Captain Quazar, Golden Gate: Treasure by the Bay, Phoenix 3, Snow Job and Star Fighter are trade-

REASURE BY THE BAY ONLY ON 3DO PHOENIX 3 ONLY ON 3DO

NIX 3 ONLY ON 3DO BATTLESPORT ONLY ON 3DO STAR FIGHTER ONLY ON 3DO SNOW JOB ONLY ON 3DO CAPTAIN QUAZAR ONLY ON 3DO GOLDEN GATE: TREASURE BY THE BAY

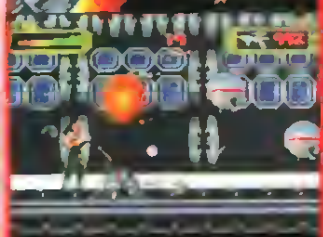


PHOENIX3™









Like great space combat and bitchin weapons? So do we. As hero Derek Freeman, you must locate starships and brave pilots to fight some surly aliens. Of course, that entails shooting the green snot out of them. Can't we all live in peace and harmony? In a word, no.



BATTLESPORT™





Arena football meets General Patton. You choose a tank. You load up on firepower. You enter the arena. You try to scare goals while opponents try to blast you to hell and back. It's a sport where a cup doesn't offer much protection.





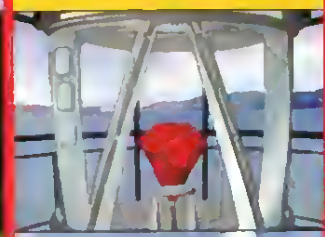








GOLDEN GATE: TREASURE BY THE BAY™





Someone left more than their heart in San Francisco. It's hidden treasure, and no Tony Bennett around to help you locate it. Decipher puzzles, scour for clues amongst the 3000 beautiful watercolor images of the City by the Bay. Like MYST? You'll love this.



CAPTAIN QUAZAR™









"Look! Up in the sky! It's a rocket!" No, it's a grown man in very snug tights. Meet Captain Quazar - the bumbling superhero with powers far beyond mortal men (and brains far below). Battle evildoers with an arsenal of weapons and the wits of the witless Captain.



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ONLY ON 3DO CAPTAIN QUAZAR ONLY ON 3DO GOLDEN GATE

3DO

WE GOT IT. THEY DON'T.

3DO ZONE

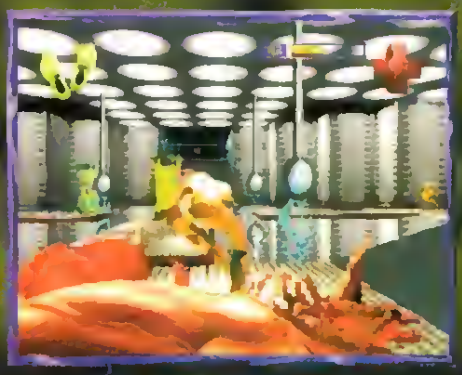
It's been about a year since we first saw screen shots of *PO'ed*. Now that development of the game has been completed, it's obvious that the extra time and effort taken by the programmers at Any Channel was time well spent. In fact, *PO'ed* is my favorite 3-D game for the 3DO. Let me explain...

First of all, the 3-D engine in this game is incredible, eclipsing almost everything I've ever seen on this system. Now even though the 3DO's 3-D abilities are no match for the newer systems, the polygon graphics and texture mapped environments in *PO'ed* are downright staggering in places. Overall, the level design in *PO'ed* is fantastic. It's much more three-dimensional than other games of this type (vertically in particular) and even the auto-map feature (the best I've ever seen) can be viewed, scaled and rotated in 3-D. In this game, you really have to think 3-D.

Some of the enemy characters, however, were a bit too fruity for my liking. In *PO'ed*, you'll see everything from huge leg/butt creatures running around, trying to kill you with their fart-projectiles, to odd female/insect beings clad in G-string bikinis and toting double-barreled shotguns! One question... Why?













REVIEW

3DO

DEVELOPER - ANY CHANNEL

PUBLISHER - ANY CHANNEL

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - NOW





There aren't any puzzles to speak of really, the emphasis is more on collecting items (weapons, health, rocket-packs, fuel, etc.), hitting switches, blowing away bad guys, and finding the exit. That may sound simplistic, it may sound crude, but the fact is, in *PO'ed* it works and it works well.

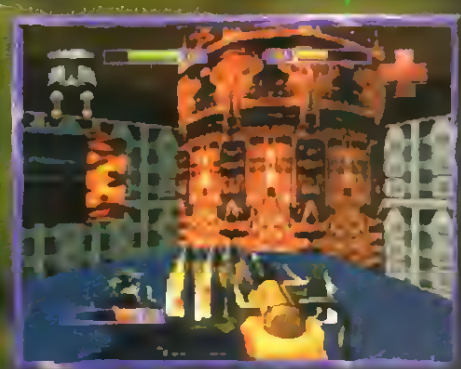
At a time where many 3DO games are taking themselves a bit too seriously, PO'ed elbows and flatulates itself to the head of the pack. This game sacrifices subtleties and refinement for raw charisma. *PO'ed* is supremely playable. *PO'ed* is insanely addictive. *PO'ed* is mindless fun. And, with an enhanced PlayStation version already on the way, *PO'ed* is not about to fall through the cracks anytime soon. -K. Lee



K. LEE
MY FAVORITE GAME FOR THE 3DO. NO KIDDING!







PREVIEW

3DO

DEVELOPER - EA

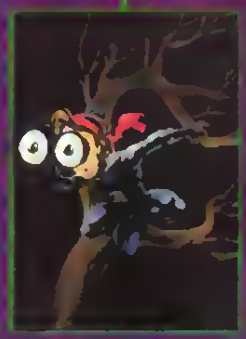
PUBLISHER - EA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - 1ST QUARTER



THE STALKER
SHOCKWAVE 2 GOES BEYOND THE GATE.



SHOCKWAVE 2

BEYOND THE GATE

In the middle of a bustling industrial operation, an unusual artifact was uncovered one day in Sector 41. Right away, various officials were vying to take the artifact off the hands of those who found it.

The clutch of investigators that showed up to claim the artifact aroused suspicion, and when their cover was blown, it was discovered that pirates had fooled the humans and seized the device. Subsequently, the first mercenary unit to go after the device found no survivors at the outpost, and they weren't too sure it was the work of pirates. Soon after, an alien ship attacked the mercenary ship in orbit, then jumped to the safety of The Gate. Who is responsible for this atrocity? That, and the secret behind the Jump Gate are about to be known as your own squad of mercenaries takes a chance and ventures... *Beyond The Gate*.

EA's new chapter in the *Shockwave* saga is another first person 3-D shooter derivative of the original story, set twenty years after the last conflict ended. Fans of the original will be glad to hear that this next step in the *Shockwave* legacy features new live players and all new missions.

Shockwave 2: Beyond The Gate provides more of the same fly and shoot action found in the previous installments, with major enhancements done to boost the visual power of the game. The overall game layout and feel in *Shockwave 2* is similar to the original, yet it looks and sounds very much superior. Already it sports some of the most impressive CG cinemas and texture mapped flight sequences yet seen on the 3DO.

The controls are fairly basic, putting you in command of forward and reverse thrusters, a laser cannon, missiles and special weapons. Learning the controls of the craft is easy, thanks in part to the (ugh) lack of complete elevation control. It's mildly aggravating to have to fly around hills, but it doesn't spoil the fun.

Every level is fought with a specific goal (i.e. taking out a certain alien command post). A small window will flash FMV clips of your flight commander giving you in-flight instructions. As you work through the mission, you'll receive further orders as you go.

Shockwave 2 is sure to be one of the more talked about 3DO-based sequels. EA is still in the midst of development, but we'll keep you posted as this game matures.

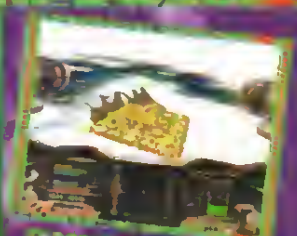
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'SONY PLAYSTATION' Sony's breakthrough 32-bit processor CD ROM architecture delivers real time experience with ever changing 3-D perspectives and stereo CD quality sound **$319**



'TEKKEN' 8 of the world's finest most deadly fighters are brought together by the Japanese Mishima Empire for one reason only money This is the ultimate battle for supremacy, where the winner goes home rich and the loser goes home in a pine box **PSX $46**



'MEGA MAN X 3' Those tricky reploids are on the rampage again, and Mega Man X stands tall against them. New and familiar robotic enemies and new robot customization feature for tremendous replay value **$56**



'DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 2' Greater graphics and faster action for this even bigger adventure! All new worlds populated with new enemies and new friends **$64**



'VIRTUA FIGHTER 2' This revolutionary fighting game is faster, more realistic and harder to beat. Two new characters and texture mapped graphics with ever changing 3-D perspectives make this game outstanding! **SAT $56**



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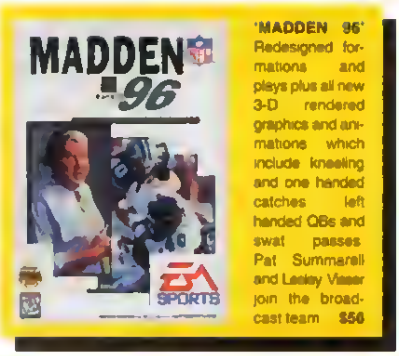
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SATURN STRATEGY

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JAGUAR'S DOOM

REVIEW

JAGUAR

DEVELOPER · ATARI
PUBLISHER · ATARI
FORMAT · 24 MEG CART.
OF PLAYERS · 1-2
DIFFICULTY · EASY
AVAILABLE · DECEMBER



THE STALKER
ALL THAT'S MISSING IS MARIO IN HIS LITTLE GO-CART.







Why look, *Atari Karts*! No, you aren't reading the title wrong. *Atari Karts* is actually the same of this new Jaguar-based *Mario Kart* clone. In addition to looking strikingly similar to *Mario Kart* (right down to the zany little racers), *Atari Karts* plays a lot like it, too... with a little liposuction for the sake of originality.

Atari Karts has four racing circuits and four difficulty levels to choose from. I had hoped that each would feature different tracks, but most are simply rehashes without so much as a scenery change. *Atari Karts*' lack of depth and easy completion seriously hurt its overall worth.

ATARI KARTS

While AK is mostly straight out barrier dodging, there are power-ups on each track that you can collect for greater performance, and little glowing arrow icons that propel you over water or shoot you through a rough area. How original. Your obstacles are the usual assortment: rocks on the course, puddles, large objects on the track for no particular reason, and huge bodies of water. Despite all of that, if seems that no matter how poorly you begin, you can always finish in first place with relative ease. Racing against lifeless opponents while traveling just a bit faster than you do in *B.C. Racers* gets a little stale after a while.

Although not the most visually breathtaking Jag game ever, *Atari Karts* looks impressive. The detail and colors make decent use of that famous 64-bit hardware, and there's actually very little pop-up on the few sprites visible ahead of you. One very nice feature that *Atari Karts* doesn't seem to use enough is the multi-layered, parallax-laden backgrounds on certain stages. Some stages are much more impressive than others, but all of them are solid and up to the standards of the Jaguar.

Atari Karts has to be considered a musical dud. The days of three-channel PCM are far behind us, yet we still have to hear them in new games. Some of the music isn't half bad, but there are a few pieces I could do without. Particularly the weird filler music thrown in at various places.

Considering the true nature of the Jaguar, I'd have to say this game is less than we hoped for. It hurts me that the "64-bit" Jaguar's biggest games look no better than 16-bit. Look at the PS's *Ridge* or *Wipeout*... So, for half the cost of a 32-bit system, you can have a game with about half the quality. Do the math.

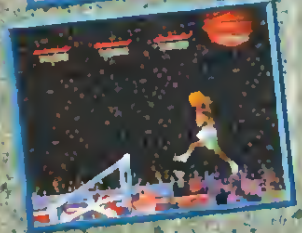








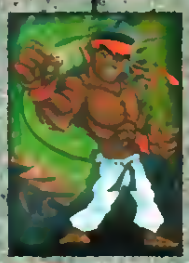




REVIEW

JAGUAR

DEVELOPER · ATARI
PUBLISHER · ATARI
FORMAT · 32 MEG CART.
OF PLAYERS · ONE
DIFFICULTY · EASY
AVAILABLE · DECEMBER



K. LEE
PHILLY'S BIG LEGEND BRINGS TO THE JAG.

The first fruit of the Acclaim/Atari software deal has become a reality. The Jaguar has become the proud recipient of Acclaim's crown jewel: *NBA JAM: Tournament Edition*. Now I know what you're thinking-"64-bit" interactive multimedia system plus 16-bit arcade game equals the best home version of the game on the market. Or at least it should be better than the 32-bit PlayStation game. After all, this is a 64-bit system, right? Yeah right. If you, like Atari, wonder why you should spend 300 bucks on a lowly 32-bit system instead of $100 on a 64-bit Jag... here's why. The PlayStation *Jam* has bigger characters, more color, much better line scrolling, better music, cleaner sound samples, and the list goes on and on. It's not that the Jag version isn't a great version (because it is) but I suggest that Atari shouldn't compare themselves nor their games to Sony's or Sega's 32-bit systems (and shouldn't even DREAM about comparing themselves to the U[illegible]). If you happen to own a Jag (deep pain) and like *NBA Jam*, your game has arrived. If you (a Jag owner) also feel that your system is capable of competing with the big boys (everybody else) you need to take a look at reality. - K. Lee

BATTLE MORPH

Battle Morph represents one of two things: the beginning of good things to come or the Jaguar CD's swan song. My money's on the former. I know for a fact Atari has some 32 games currently in development. There are those who would dismiss the Jag but I for one view him as an addition to my other systems and therefore remain optimistic. As you know, if you own a Jag, *Cyber Morph* was a fantastic game. I'm here to tell you *Battle Morph* is five times as good. Deeper mission-ops with tuneful and smooth techno, a hot CG intro and cinemas and a voice you'd swear belongs to Sean Connery are just some of the enhancements. I'd dive deeper into *Battle Morph* but I'm gonna save that for next month. There's no way I'm gonna blow the chance to go in depth on one of the Jag's brightest lights. Tune in next month. PS: Let's not forget about *Defender 2000*, either.

-Takahara



PREVIEW

DEVELOPER - ATD

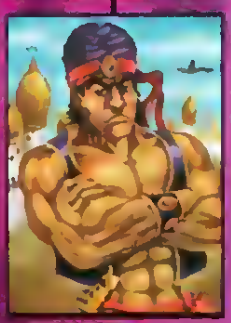
PUBLISHER - ATARI

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



TAKAHARA
THE SEQUEL I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR...







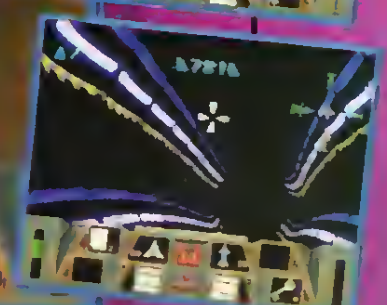














PREVIEW

32X

The 32X is finally beginning te pey eff. Following the recent releese of *Kolibri* (a great game) and VF2 (another greet game), four more excellent games are headed yoar way. Scavenger's *X-Men*, Acclaim's *Spot Goes To Hollywood* (by Westweed), Sega's *Blackthorne* (by Interplay), end the geme before you: *Spiderman: Web of Fire* by none other than Blue Sky (the cempany respensible fer tha amazing Vectormen), ara all closing fast.









Spiderman: Web of Fire is basically a (very good) side scrolling Genesis game en 'roids.. Visually, SWoF isn't big en effects but dees feature quite e few rendered elements, leads of parallax, end lots of coler. That's only part of where the memery went. The rest lies in the animation, which is excellent, the digitized explosiens, and the game's length, which are all impressiva aspects of SWoF, especially when compered to the average Genesis game. I've accepted the



E. STORM
LOOK OUT... HERE COMES THE SPIDER-MAN...





SPIDER-MAN
WEB OF FIRE









fact that the 32X is a Genesis booster, and not a viable comparison to the other 32-bit machines on the market. The 300,000+ who own one probably should too. It's a low priced alternative. Marketed accordingly (Sega can't get enough of themselves lately), all would have been calm from day one. Like how I stray and get my own two cents in?

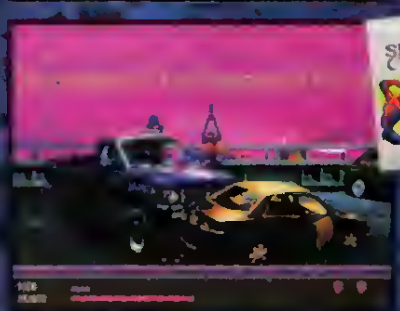
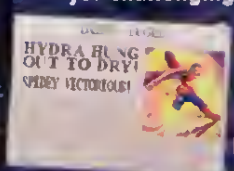
SWoF is big on play mechanics as our metoid hero has a vast array of neato moves to both dodge or kill the enemy. Spidey can climb walls and ceilings, flip about acrobatically, has several different punches and kicks, and can swing or shoot with his web. Web power runs out and must be accumulated throughout each level. Run out and you're grounded, and in this game, you don't want to be grounded.

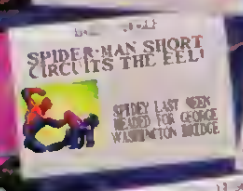
The version I previewed was about 80% complete with the difficulty set on impossible. I'm told after final tweakage the game will be toned to do-able yet challenging. If this is the case look for this to be the best game featuring Spiderman yet. Review to follow. -E. Storm

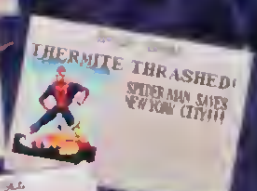












GEN'32 JAPAN SOFT



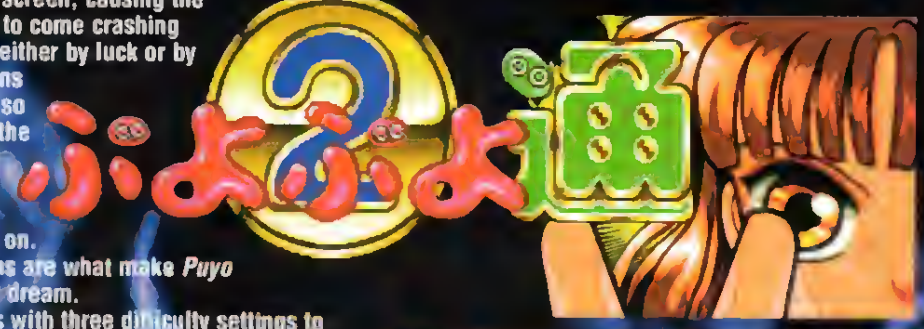
I truly can't estimate how many hours I've spent over the years perfecting my game of *Puyo Puyo* on the SFC and PC Engine. I generally detest puzzle games, EXCEPT for *Puyo Puyo*.

The basic design is almost the same as it is in the other *Puyo* games. Links of two "puyo's" will fall from the sky, and you have to guide them so like colors can connect in a chain of four or more in any direction. Chains of four or more are eliminated from the screen, causing the "beans" on top of it to come crashing down. Sometimes (either by luck or by skill) the falling beans arrange themselves so that four or more of the same color will link and be eliminated, and then maybe another four, and so on. Those chain reactions are what make *Puyo Puyo* the strategists' dream.

Puyo Puyo 2 comes with three difficulty settings to play against the CPU: Renshyu (practice) mode, a beginners' game against moronic computer opponents; normal mode, where each new enemy is much smarter and the [illegible] move faster; and Tsu' Mode, a mini puzzle/RPG [illegible] complete with save game feature), where you have to beat all 36 *Puyo Puyo* characters. While the CPU games are a decent pastime and will help you learn the craft, playing against another *Puyo Puyo* fan is an experience not to be missed.

PP2's graphics and sounds are [illegible] unimpressive, but I'm actually glad the game was left pure instead of being doctored up for the next generation. The only changes made were actually very positive: a bigger bonus (more stones on your opponent) for clearing your screen of all beans, the chance to eliminate penalty stones before they drop and a curious new remix of the traditional *Puyo Puyo* soundtrack.

Puyo Puyo 2 is simply one of those games that makes you have to swallow your pride and enjoy. It's possibly the most addicting game of all time, and is certainly worth a look for all of you import Saturn buyers. -The Stalker



REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - COMPILE

PUBLISHER - LMS MUSIC

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

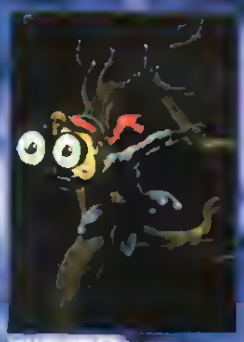
AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN











THE STALKER
PUYO PUYO... TSU!

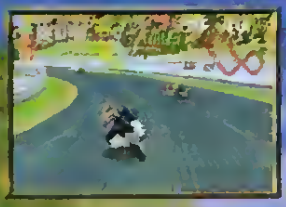
HANG ON GP '95

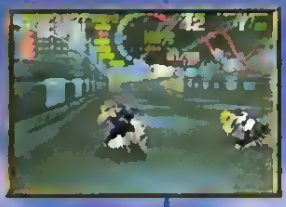
PREVIEW

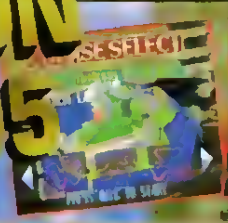








































DEVELOPER - AM2
PUBLISHER - SEGA
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



K. LEE

There really isn't anything not to like about *Hang On GP '95*. The racing is fast paced and challenging, the 3-D graphics are amazing, there are plenty of bikes and tracks to choose from, and the sound totally kicks.

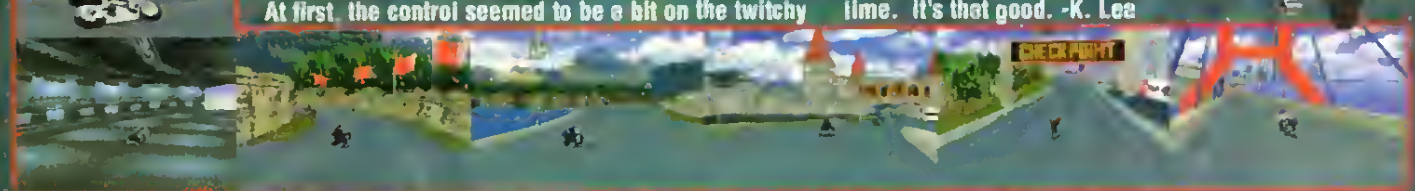
More than anything else, the graphics in this game rock. The 3-D texture mapped visuals are very convincing with undulating track elevations, complex roadside scenery, zero polygon pop-up, cool multi-angled replays, lots of on-screen bikes (with no slowdown), tunnels, bridges, I could go on and on... Oh, and the game is smooth, smooth, smooth. The frame rate is high enough (about 30 fps) to provide seamless, glitch-free racing enjoyment at all times.



At first, the control seemed to be a bit on the twitchy side, but after a while I became accustomed to it... no worries. There are also 5 different bikes to choose from (all with different strengths and weakness), 3 courses (each with an extended version, so in reality, there are 6 courses in all), and 3 difficulty levels. These added options and choices give *Hang On GP '95* long-term challenge and appeal.

Hang On GP '95 has a realistic sound and feel. The game itself is closer in concept to the actual Grand Prix motorcycle circuit than the classic arcade game that bears its name. Without a doubt, *Hang On GP '95* is my favorite GP motorcycle racing game of all time. It's that good. -K. Lee





Beyond the Beyond

Art by
Amji Shibata



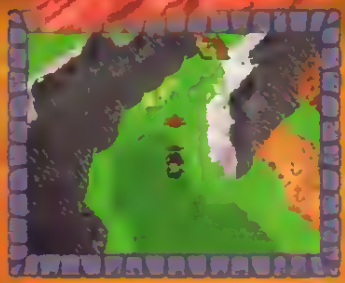
STRATEGY

PlayStation

DEVELOPER: CAMELOT
PUBLISHER: SCE
FORMAT: CD
1 PLAYER
DIFFICULTY: ADVANCED
AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN

In Japan, Sony uh follows Sega's lead. No, that's too nice of a phrase. They copy Sega every chance they get. For *Virtua Cop* they have *Hornad Owl*. For *Daisenryaku* they have *Sento Kokka*. For *Panzer Dragoon* they have *Record of the Beldeselva War*... the list goes on and on. For once, however, Sony has beat Sega to the punch by releasing the first true 32-bit non-action RPG. *Arc the Lad* and *Riglord Saga* don't count, they're more simulation-based. So how is the first next-generation RPG, you ask? Is it a marked improvement over the best 16-bit contenders? In many areas, the answer is yes... but in many others, *Beyond the Beyond: The Faraway Canaan* is lacking.

The storyline is rather basic. You play as knight-in-training named Fynn, son of the swordmaster Kevins. Fynn's kingdom, Marion, is overthrown by the king of Vandore, a country to the south, with the help of a mysterious magic-user named Schtatt. Our hero and the daughter of the captain of Marion's guard, Annie, soon save Edward, the prince of Marion, and his bodyguard Samson. While sneaking Edward out of a castle dungeon you are confronted with one of Schtatt's three generals, the witch Ramue, who curses Samson, halving his strength. The four decide to head for neighboring Zaragoon, an ally of Marion, to ask for reinforcements. On arrival, Samson is ordered to prove his strength if any troops are to be sent to Marion. Of course, he cannot; Ramue's curse prevents him. The party hears a rumor of an incredibly powerful shamen to the north who can break Samson's curse, but, on arrival, they find he is gone. Fynn, Annie, Edward and Samson once again set off to the unknown. The strategy guide on the following pages will take you about this far, several hours into the game. I'm sorry I couldn't go farther, but space restrictions prevented me.











Beyond is, for the most part, an orthodox RPG - you rest at inns, save at churches, and choose commands in battle. Let's face it, almost every gaming concept possible in RPG's has been done, and it seems like BTB's designers were left grasping at straws for new devices. They just HAD to throw in some "improvements," one of which almost destroys the game. This is the "Reality Battle System." Basically, what this lofty-titled feature amounts to is slamming the buttons on your pad to raise the power of attacks, evade the enemy, and heal faster. What fun. And since the battles in *Beyond* come every two steps, prepare for *Viewpoint* or *Pulstar*-caliber shredded fingers. The other new feature is the "Vitality Point System," which uses life points to revive you if you're knocked out in battle. BTB is also chock-full of "puzzle dungeons" in which you have to stop up holes, switch floor panels around, and lead statues around that prevent any backward movement - it's forward, left or right only. These







can get quite hard, especially later in the game.

The visuals are an odd mix of godly polygonal scenes and decidedly 16-bit towns and dungeons. Camelot (Sega fans will know Camelot as Sonic Software Planning) obviously spent the most programming and art time on the battles and field scenes. Fair enough, but when compared to the 2-D scenes it's like looking at two different games. It's not that the overhead art is bad, but it presents no advantages over most recent 16-bit RPG's. I can safely say that these are the best command-based battles I've ever seen, however, with rapid camera angle changes, light-sourcing spells from heaven and beautiful non-polygonal characters. The *Clockwork Knight*-style field map is also extremely cool - I'm sure everyone will be copying this one. The music is typical Sonic Team confusion, but the technical quality of the PCM is incredible.

Though BTB is not of the highest quality, I have to recommend it simply because it's the first true 32-bit RPG. It's far from bad, but in the joy-crammed world of 16-bit RPG's it wouldn't cut it. Hopefully someone will release this in America, but until then you can utilize my brain-pulpingly joyous strategy guide on the following pages to work your way through SCE's *Beyond the Beyond*. - Nick Rox

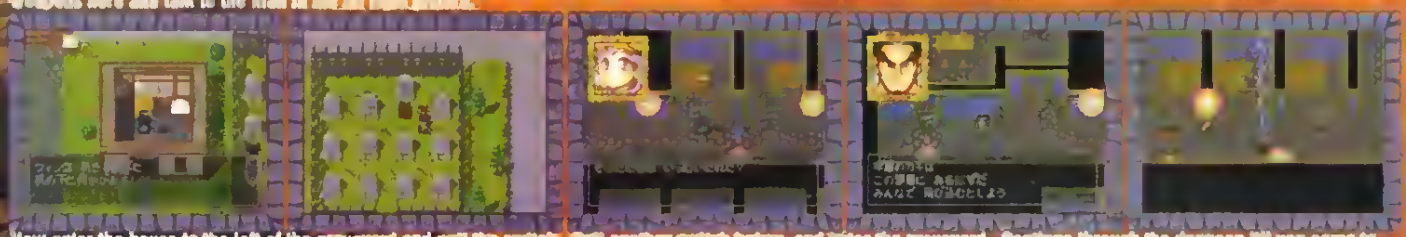
Nick Rox's Guide to Beyond the Beyond



After Kevins returns you to Gaished's house, go downstairs and take the sword on the wall. Now walk to the treasure chest, choose the second option and take all the items within. After leaving town, enter the cave at right. Follow Annie, and turn left at the fork, go down, and witness Annie's death!



Return to the fork, go right, and continue down to the spring of holy water. Use your Pail on the spring and return to the scene of Annie's death. Use the holy water to revive Annie. Return to the spring, get more water and return home. As soon as you regain control after Annie hears her brother Belushi, head north to Pandar. Buy new weapons here and talk to the man in the far right window.



Now enter the house to the left of the graveyard and pull the switch. Pull another switch below, and enter the graveyard. Continue through the dungeon 'til you come to Edward's cell. Talk to him. Walk left, fight the guards and gain the jail key. Use it on Edward's cell door. Now exit. Ramoh appears and curses Samson! This curse halves his strength. Samson tells you to meet him at a church not far away, and Edward gives you a rosary to show the priest there.



Return home to Aira village and check your house. Gaished and Sonya will tell... nay, insist you go to Zaragoon to request troops to halt Bandora's invasion. Head east, then south from Aira and use the rosary on the priest. Solve the Goddess puzzle, and walk north. Once inside the cave, Belushi locks the gate and breaks off the handle, sacrificing himself for you. Talk to the priest in the cave and answer No, then Yes. Lead him outside. Now walk East to the forest dungeon.



In this dungeon, you must roll pumpkins to stop up holes... this can get tricky! Once outside, enter the east cave, and pass through it. On the other side, travel northeast to reach Zaragoon. Walk north and talk to Minister Greed, then buy new weapons in town.



Enter the sewers via a well. Work your way through the dungeon and come up in the bar. You'll get a key to a locked door in the sewers which will allow you to emerge within the castle. After speaking with General Bison, return to town and enter the castle by normal means.

CONTINUED! ➔



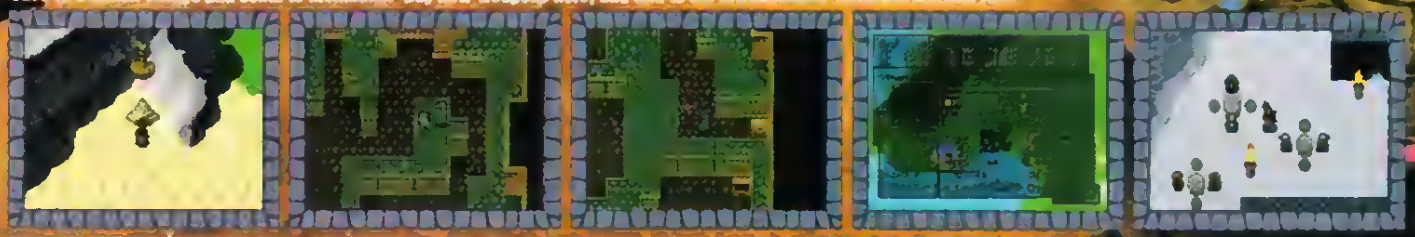
BEYOND THE BEYOND GUIDE CONTINUED



Armed with "proof" that Samson is a time with a lower strength: He is cursed, and cannot move a pillar. Consequently, no troops will be sent to Marion! Go back to the castle via the sewer route and talk with Queen Scarlett. You'll learn of a village of Shamans in the south where Samson might be able to find a cure. Head Southeast from Zaragoza to the desert village of Ola. Get new weapons here, then head, south, west and north to the Cave to Shaman Village. Get the Magic Stone of Ice each, and exit the cave.



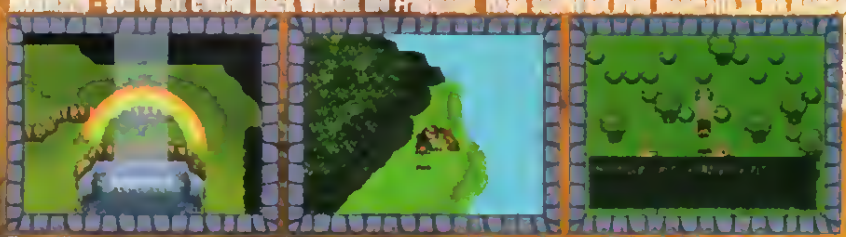
Enter Shaman Village. Walk north and enter the large tent, go down, and talk to the head Shaman. He cannot save Shamash, only the Shaman Mikoh can. Return to the town, go left, and use the magic stone on the wizard with the cauldron. Try to leave the town, and you'll meet Tuala, who will join you. Head out through the Cave to Shaman Village and south to Monmaila. Buy new weapons here, and talk to the Innkeepers. Return to Ola and rest.



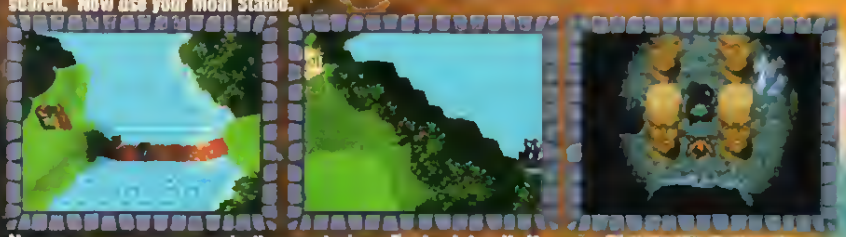
Walk North from Ola to the Pyramid of the Gods. Work your way down through this maddening puzzle dungeon... your goal is the chest in the third picture. Inside it is the Moon Fragment, which you should use just outside Monmaila town. You'll find Monmaila at night to be very different!



Search for hidden treasure chests, buy new weapons and talk to both Mia at the [illegible] Monmaila during the day and Tuala, your Moon Fragment for a Moon Stone. Head back to Ola, [illegible] Monmaila - you're not coming back without the Fragment! Head southeast from Monmaila to the Rainbow Valley. Work your way through Rainbow Valley, looking around the stone heads by staying as far away from them as possible.



You will emerge near the village of Easte. In town, examine the large Moai Statue and walk to the CENTER of the stones in the upper-right part of the village. Take a step right and three steps up, then search. Now use your Moai Statue.



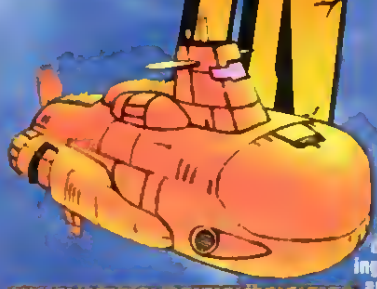
Now you can cross over to the mysterious Easter Island! Here you'll fight the first real boss, explore a treacherous puzzle dungeon and meet the pirate captain Domino.

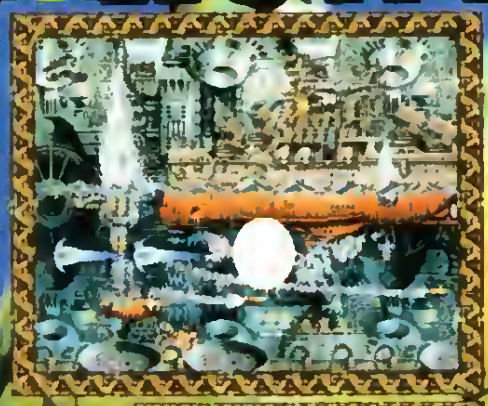


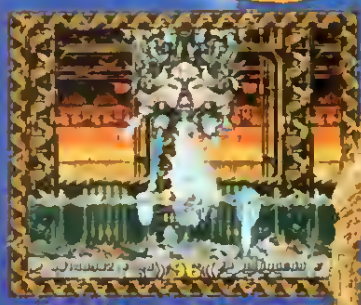
THIS STRATEGY GUIDE WILL GET YOU SEVERAL HOURS THROUGH BEYOND THE BEYOND. YOU SHOULD HAVE ENOUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE GAME TO PROCEED FROM HERE. GOOD LUCK!! — NICK R.

irem XING

IN THE HUNT



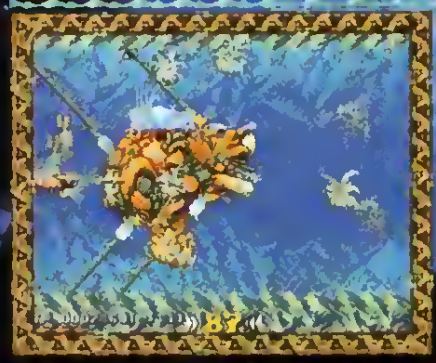














The PlayStation is rapidly turning into the king of vintage arcade games. Many happy titles of old, like *Wolf Fang*, the Namco *Museums*, *Warriors of Fate*, and *Buster Brothers* are coming, hearkening back to the days when arcades meant variety and innovation. So far, they've been virtual duplicates of their arcade counterparts... and Xing/Irem's 6-stage *In the Hunt* is no exception to the rule.

If you've never played the arcade version of *In the Hunt*, your thoughts upon reaching the second level will be, "There are WAY too many things on screen." There's so much going on: [illegible] explosions, plumes of water, shattered glass, bricks, boards, and other assorted rubble make it almost impossible to concentrate on the myriad bullets and enemies attempting to destroy you. The astounding thing, however, is that *In the Hunt* never slows down or flickers. This isn't such an amazing thing in the 32-bit world, but for those of us that have been firmly entrenched in 16-bit for the last five years, it's mighty slight... *In the Hunt* has very little parallax (in fact it never goes beyond one layer), but the amount of sprites on-screen make up for the lack of scrolls. It's not as if the PlayStation version is missing parallax... the arcade game had but one layer as well.

Even for a shooter, *In the Hunt*'s gameplay is minimal. You can only shoot up, forward, and drop depth charges below. The meager power-ups change the appearance of your torpedoes little, and their actual effect changes even less. The most interesting of *Hunt*'s gameplay traits is the fact that you move the screen forward by yourself - it doesn't scroll automatically. Not very exciting, I know, but different. On the whole, *In the Hunt* looks and feels like a Neo•Geo game (the ultra-detailed graphic style is remarkably similar to Last Resort) with no slowdown. The music is fairly nondescript 80's-ish shooter tunes, although you get a choice from the ultra Genesis-sounding original arcade soundtrack and a much better arranged score.

I highly recommend *In the Hunt* to every PlayStation owner - even if you've never played good ol' Irem's truly groundbreaking arcade game, *In the Hunt* is extremely fun, if short, and a most welcome break from the general 3-D pap on the PS. Let's hope Xing has secured other Irem arcade treats... I pray that *Undercover Cops* is on its way! -Nick Rox

PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER: XING

PUBLISHER: XING

FORMAT: CD

2 PLAYERS

DIFFICULTY: VARIABLE

AVAILABLE EARLY JAPAN







REVIEWS

SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - DATA EAST

PUBLISHER - DATA EAST

FORMAT - CD

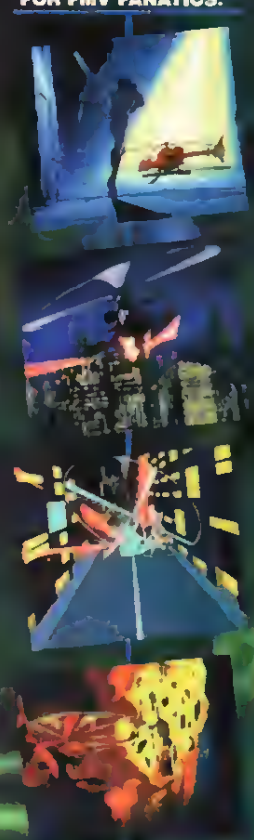
OF PLAYERS - 1-2

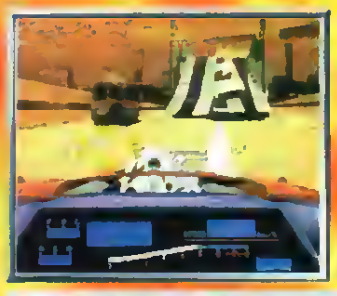
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW

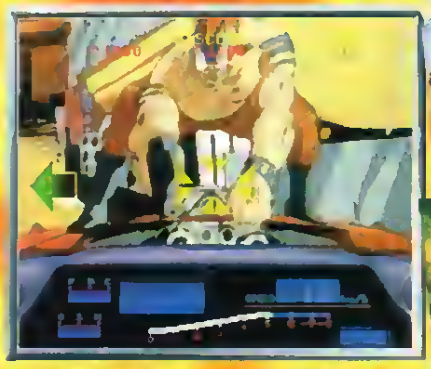


MISS DEMEANOR
A GREAT DOUBLE CD FOR FMV FANATICS.













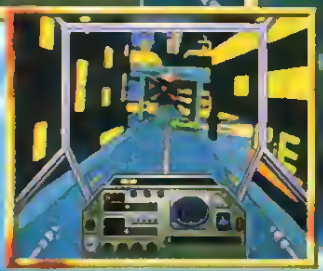














You're driving off on your honeymoon and a band of ruthless thugs forces you over a cliff, killing your bride. What's a guy to do? Power up your car and obliterate every last one of those @#*%! At least that's the reaction of Data East's *Road Blaster*. Your car is your only weapon. Use it to ram your enemies into and over a multitude of obstacles.

The music has a good pounding beat, a necessity for any driving game (even the FMV variety). Though there's nothing spectacular about RB's graphics. What's there, runs cleanly on the Saturn. Another slight drawback is the action - it's fast or tame. You are either watching the computer maneuver you, or your thumbs are flying in order to keep up. Control-wise, I felt like I had to overreact after the obstacles had passed in order to be successful, but you get used to it rather quickly.

Non-Japanese speakers fear not; the small amount of text is in English. So just turn on the ignition and start smashing your way to vengeance.



In *Thunder Storm* your mission is simple: Use your high tech jet helicopter to destroy all terrorist strongholds across the globe. But beware, every compound is viciously guarded on land, sea, and air.

Though it looks a little pixelly in certain levels, TS has some good visual effects. My favorite was zooming around the statues on Easter Island. Reaction time is a tad slow. You can have a direct hit on something and it won't register for several seconds, leaving you to debate whether to keep shooting at the target or get ready for the next one.

The voice is clear and in ENGLISH - too bad the directions you are given are sometimes reversed. Rely on your eyes, not your ears. The sound effects are perfect, though I'm only guessing that's what it sounds like when your helicopter is ripped open like a toddler's present on Christmas morning.

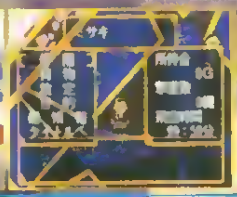
Thunder Storm and *Road Blaster* packaged together is an action packed combo that no FMV fan should resist. Both titles will keep you blasting and crashing for hours on end.

-Miss Demeanor

Nick Rox's PLAYSTATION PREVIEWS

Record of the Beldeselva War
by SCE

YES! This may be the coolest genre combination in all of gaming, ever... shooting and RPG! The very *Panzer Dragoon*-ish *Beldeselva* comes out next year with the controller shown below-right.


Floating Runner
by XING

XING, the porters of many fine arcade games are working on their first totally original PlayStation game, the *Jumping Flash!*-derivative *Floating Runner*. FR will debut next year in Japan.



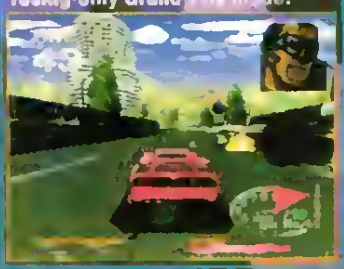
Super Big Brother
by Messiah



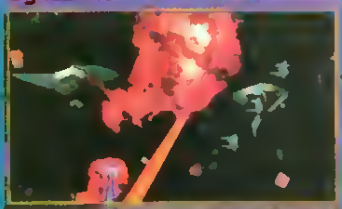
The hyper-fruity PC Engine series of shooters populated by posing muscle dudes, *Super Big Brother*, is coming to the PS in December. The subtitle of this one is "The Ultimate Invincible Galaxy Strongman."

Ray Tracer
by Taito

Taito's polygonal sequel to the 80's arcade combat/driving game *Chase HQ* is coming to the PS this Winter. *Ray Tracer* features a Story Mode, Time Attack and a racing-only Grand Prix mode.



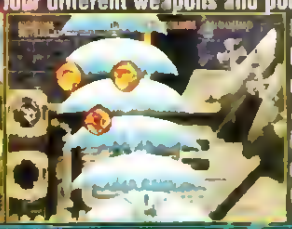
Galaxian3
by Namco



Oh joy! Namco's ten-minute long arcade laser disc game is coming to the PlayStation. Like anyone cares... Let's hope the FMV is better than *StarBlade*'s this time around. *Galaxian3* is only 10% done, so don't expect this one for a little while...

Stahlfeder
by Santos

Newcomer Santos is currently putting the finishing touches on their 2-D shooter *Stahlfeder* for release on December 15th. *Stahlfeder* features rendered CG graphics, four different weapons and polygonal bosses. Look for a review of *Stahlfeder* in next month's GameFan.

Reverthion
by Technosoft

YES! Can it be?? A SHOOTER from Technosoft, makers of the *Thunder Force* series of godliness on Genesis? Though *Reverthion* takes place in an arena like *CyberSled*, there's many more weapons and strategies you can employ. Reverthion is out December 1st.




Gambare Goemon
by Konami

The series that began on the Famicom, came to the SNES as *Mystical Ninja* and spawned two very bad sequels is on its way to the PlayStation. The PS *Goemon* features 2-D action and town sequences and 3-D *Goemon* Impact (*Goemon*'s giant robot) scenes. *Gambare Goemon* is out early next year.





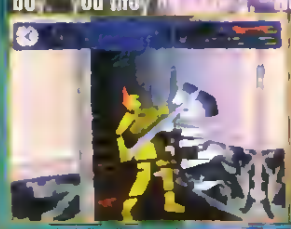
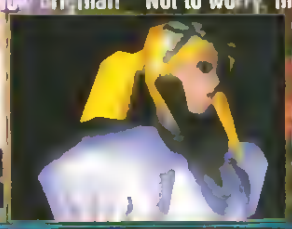

Slam Dragons
by Jaleco

Jaleco is currently developing *Slam Dragons*, a 2-D fighting game for the PS. SD, the first game to truly support [illegible] features polygonal backgrounds and rendered fighters. There will be 8 characters, guard reversals and super moves in the final game. SD comes out in '96.

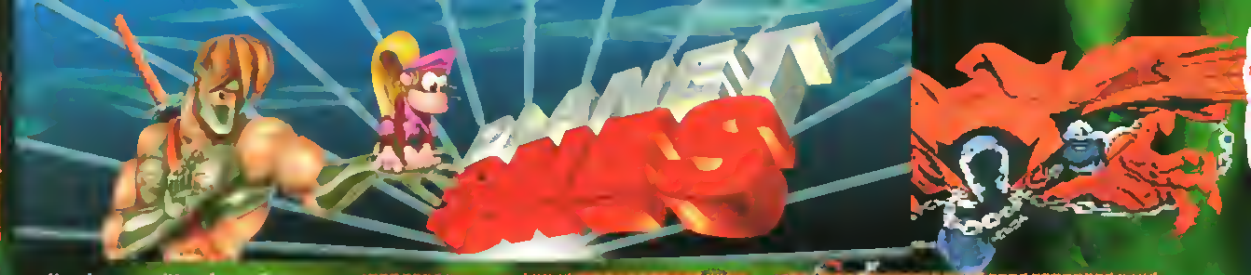



Kokumeikan
by Tecmo

Kokumeikan is a [illegible] Simulation RPG" from Tecmo due in February of '96. *Kokumeikan* is an RPG filled with many puzzles and traps. "Oh boy," you may be saying, "how original!" Not to worry, in this game you play as a demonic mansion and lay traps for the good guys!

REVIEW



SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

DEVELOPER - UNIVERSAL
PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM
FORMAT - 24 MEG CART.
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INSANE
AVAILABLE - NOW



K. LEE
SPAWN... A GOOD GAME PLAGUED BY INSANE DIFFICULTY.

I've been waiting for a *Spawn* game to surface for a long time and I'm glad that it's finally materialized on the SNES. Programmed by Ukiyotei (the same group responsible for Sony Imagesoft's *Hook* and *Sky Blazer* and who also did some work for Capcom of Japan), it's great to see that Todd McFarlane's comic book hero is represented by a good development team. For this, I am thankful.

Unfortunately, *Spawn* (the game) turned out to be the tried (and somewhat tired) *Final Fight*-type action/fighting game, with a touch of platforming added. I feel that the *Castlevania*-style action or action/RPG genre would've been a more fitting game style for a dark (no pun intended) character like Spawn. Now that I've gotten that off my chest, we will now return to our regularly scheduled program...

As it stands, *Spawn* turns out to be a decent (albeit excessively difficult) game, with many plusses to its credit. Let's take graphics for starters. The Spawn comics are known for their visual style and the SNES game is no different. Each level is brimming with vivid color, imaginative



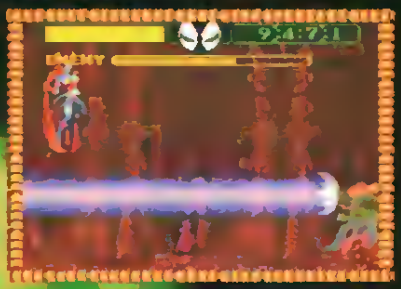




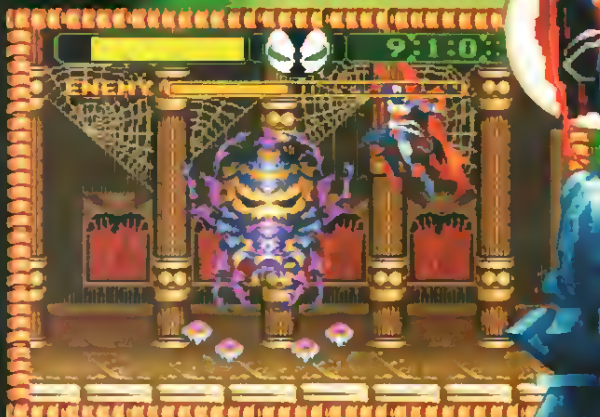












background design and detailed art. I would describe the graphics as clean and detailed, but slightly basic... just slightly. The enemy character and boss design are well drawn, but certain bosses (especially the Violator) lack animation. The character animation too, is a little stiff. Otherwise I like the look of *Spawn* quite a bit.

The sound in *Spawn* is very good. The one thing that bothered me however, was the music in the 2nd level. My problem is not with the quality, but rather the composition. The music bears an uncanny resemblance to the tunes in *Panzer Dragoon*. Whatever the case, it still sounds good... and that's the bottom line.

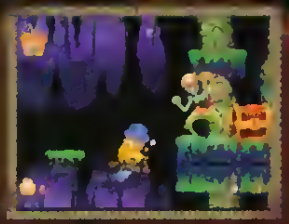
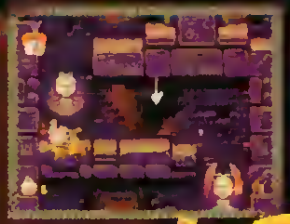
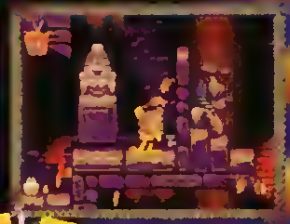
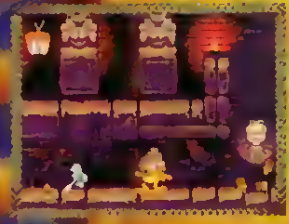
The biggest problem I have with *Spawn* is its difficulty. For one, there are an insane number of *SF2*-style special moves (fireballs, uppercuts, teleports, etc.) which must be mastered in order to get far in the game. Why? Because if you don't, the enemies will keep on delivering cheap shot after cheap shot until you die (which is another problem I have with *Spawn*). Now, this wouldn't be such a problem if there wasn't a slight delay when Spawn jumps (but there is), and if the enemies weren't so hard to kill (but they are).

If you're a hard-core SNES gamer who enjoys a challenge, likes this style of game, or just digs Spawn, then your game has arrived. For me, I enjoyed some of the pain some of the time, but I believe the TRUE *Spawn* game will be the upcoming PlayStation title. I await it with baited breath... You should, too. -K.Lee







REVIEW

SEGA GENESIS

DEVELOPER - SEGA INT.
PUBLISHER - SEGA
FORMAT - 16 MEG CART.
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - NOW



K. LEE
FOR ONCE, THE GAME SURPASSES THE CARTOON.



On one fine afternoon, we find Garfield sitting back in his easy chair, relaxing and watching some TV, when all of a sudden, Odie lets out a huge unexpected bark. Naturally, this scares the fat cat and, in classic Garfield style, the feline goes flying up out of the chair. He then comes crashing down on the TV, breaking it into a million pieces. In an effort to rectify this situation, Garfield tries to do some patchwork on the TV and in doing so, he somehow gets captured by some weird, alien creatures and ends up trapped inside the TV. Garfield now has to traverse each level/TV show and find the remote control in order to make his way home.

Now, I know this story may sound a bit fruity at first and the theme may appeal more to children rather than serious gamers, but *Garfield: Caught in the Act* is one of the best action/platform games I've seen on the Genesis in months. Why?

#1: Uniqueness. Before you can even get to a level, you must first find where it is in the TV set. In each of these pre-levels, Garfield must jump, climb and grapple around broken TV tubes and electrical wires in order to find the entrance to a level. Not only is this a novel and unique idea, it's also challenging, because you can lose a life in this area plus each area gets progressively harder. Thankfully, you start out with maximum energy each time, but nothing is automatic, you must earn your way to each level... Very cool.

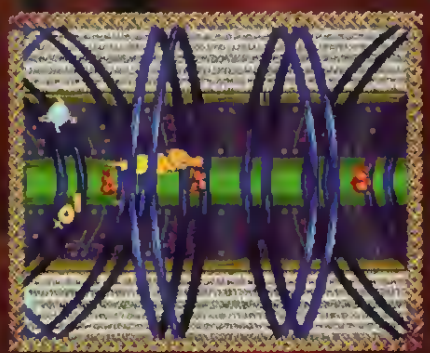
#2: Diversity. Since the game takes place in a TV set, each level has a individual episodic look. After all, almost everything you can think of has appeared on TV at some time or another. Between the unique pre-levels and the distinctive main levels, Sega could've left it at that and I would've been happy, but they want the extra mile. Not only are there power-ups and hidden stuff scattered throughout each level, but the action is broken up by two bonus levels. The first one being a "Chuck E. Cheese"-style head smacking game and the other being an amazing side-scrolling flying level with unbelievable *Ranger X*-style line scrolls.

#3: Challenge. The difficulty in this game ranges from moderate to pretty darn hard. There are enough cheap shots scattered throughout each level to keep you on your toes and it takes a while to figure out some of the bosses' patterns. One thing's for sure: Pure gamers will find plenty of challenge in *Garfield*. Also, because it's Garfield, little kids will be drawn to this game only to find themselves frustrated by the difficulty... Oh, well.

#4: Graphics and Animation. I found the character animation in *Garfield* to be smooth and well done, which is to be expected in a game based on an animated character. What I did not expect was the sheer quality of the graphics. Not only does everything have a neat, well drawn look to it, this game also has some amazing multi-layered scrolls and warping backgrounds.

The play control in *Garfield* is solid, albeit basic and a little floaty and the sound effects and music are good, but not great. These aren't really gripes I have about the game, just observations. It's just that the other features in *Garfield* stand out so much, it's hard not to have high expectations for the sound and control.

In the face of the brewing 32/64-bit console war, developers creating games for the 16-bit systems have been challenged to increase the quality of the software, or face extinction. Sega Interactive's latest game, *Garfield: Caught in the Act*, successfully steps up to that impending challenge. It blends a great look and a cool character with a unique game layout and plenty of challenge for the seasoned gamer. I like it. -K.LEE


REVIEW

GENESIS

DEVELOPER - DISNEY INT.

PUBLISHER - DISNEY INT.

FORMAT - 24 MEG CART.

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



JACE FURY
BIG TIME DISNEY QUALITY.

GARGOYLES

So you say you can't get enough of *Gargoyles*? A killer cartoon and toy line is just not enough, huh? No problem. Our friends at Disney Interactive have delivered. It's time now to welcome Goliath and his pals to your Sega Genesis.

The year is 994 A.D. and a ruthless Viking king and his army of madmen have created the ultimate instrument of destruction. Known as the Eye of Odin, this ancient artifact gives its possessor unimaginable power. Set on destroying all that stands in their way, the Vikings and their power-hungry leader set off to destroy Castle Wyvern, home to the mighty *Gargoyles*.

Throughout the game you play as Goliath, fearless leader of the gargoyles. Luckily Goliath comes equipped with a variety of attacks including claw swipes, a shoulder roll, hawk dive and the all powerful crouch-kick. In all there's a total of 6 levels with 18 stages of breakthrough battle moves and aerial combat.

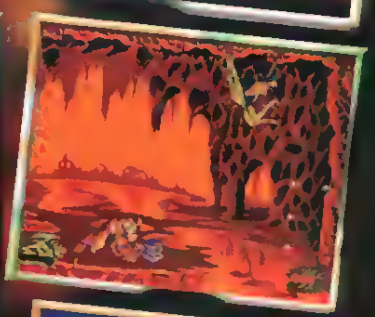
Although the game is set in ancient Scotland, you soon find yourself playing atop a huge skyscraper in downtown Manhattan. Boy, how time flies when you're having fun. Other stages include: the gargoyle rookery, where living gargoyle egg cases are nurtured by the volcanic energy of the Earth; and the forge, where Goliath must fight his way through an iron maze of danger and destruction.

At a glance it's quite clear just how serious the programmers were about the visuals in *Gargoyles*, considering the game looks every bit as cool as the cartoon. All characters are drawn brilliantly up to the most minute details. Colors remain for the most part dark, and along with the music, which I can only describe as being heavy, gives *Gargoyles* that certain artistic something that you'd expect to find in a 32-bit title. The animation is a sight to behold. Disney will no doubt be a force in gaming for years to come. They obviously take their gaming very seriously. *Gargoyles* is easily 16-bit cartoon game of the year for the Genesis.

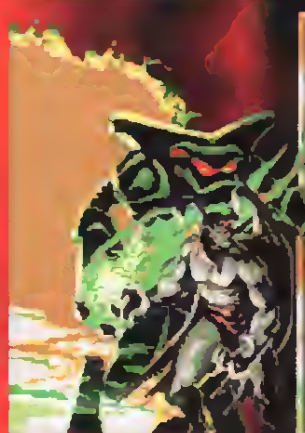
-Jace Fury







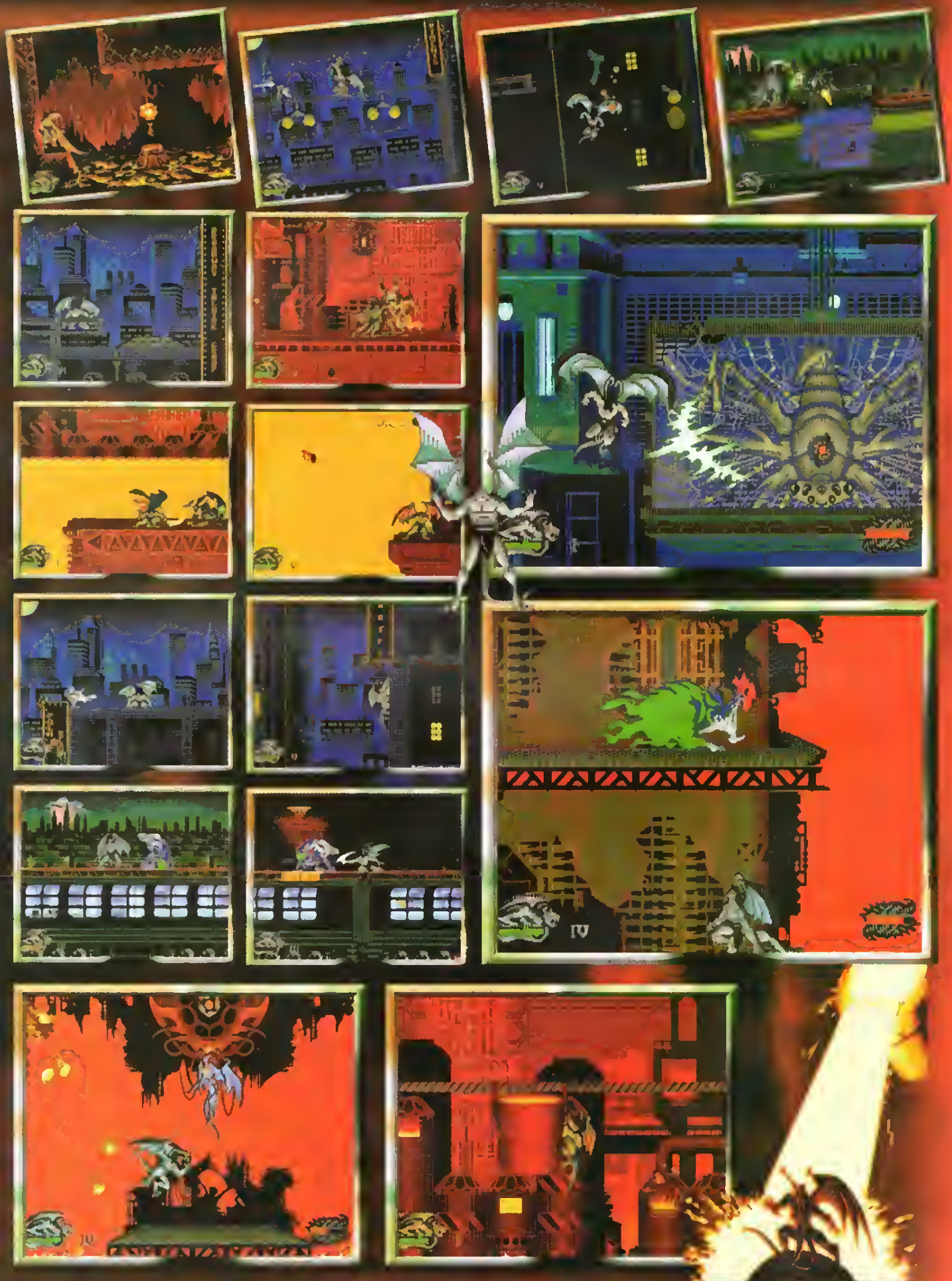












GameFan's 4th Annual MEGAWARDS

PAINSTAKINGLY SELECTED BY THE ENTIRE GAMEFAN EDITORIAL STAFF
-DAVE HALVERSON (E. STORM)
-ANDREW COCKBURN (THE ENQUIRER)
-NICK DES BARRES (NICK ROX)
-KELLY RICKARDS (K. LEE)
-CASEY LOE (TAKUHI)
-AND DAN GRANETT (THE STALKER)

OUTSIDE EDITORS (TAKAHARA, MR. GOO, SGT. GAMER) VOTE ON OVERALL CATEGORIES ONLY. SPORTS AWARDS WILL BE CHOSEN NEXT MONTH BY MATT TAYLOR, KELLY RICKARDS, AND DAVE HALVERSON. N/A MEANS EITHER NONE OR ONLY ONE EXISTED, OR, NONE WARRANTED AN AWARD. IN THE EVENT OF A TIE IN THE OVERALL CATEGORIES BOTH COMPANIES RECEIVE THE COVETED MONITAUR TROPHY CRAFTED BY TERRY WOLFINGER.

ACTION PLATFORM
genesis-vectorman
snes-Yoshi's island
playstation-rayman
saturn-astal
3do-gex
32x-chaotix

FIGHTING
genesis-weaponlord
snes-killer instinct
playstation-zero divide
saturn-vf2
3do-primal rage
32x-virtua fighter

ARCADE TRANSLATION
genesis-wrestlemania
snes-killer instinct
playstation-tekken
saturn (tie)-vf2/sega rally
3do-primal rage
32x-wrestlemania

MOVIE BASED
genesis-toy story
snes-judge dredd

SHOOTING
genesis N/a
snes n/a
playstation- philosoma
saturn-panzer dragoon
3do-bladeforce
32x-kolibri

RACING
genesis n/a
snes-dirt trax fx
saturn-sega rally
playstation-ridge racer
(motor toon would have won - if available)

ACTION/ADVENTURE
genesis-earthworm jim 2
snes-mega man 7
playstation-loaded
saturn-skeleton warriors
3do-po'ed

STRATEGY
genesis-n/a
snes-ogre battle
saturn-mystaria
3do-space hulk



SHOOTING/SIMULATION

pisyststion-wsrhswk
ssturn-thunderstrike 2

PUZZLE

gonssis-zoop
snss-kirby's svsisnche
pisyststion-zoop
ssturn-zoop
3DO-zoop

ROLE PLAYING

ssgs (16-bit)-lunsr 2
snss-ssrthbound
sstnrn-mystaris

SPECIAL EFFECTS

genssis-bstmsn & robin
snes-diddy's kong qusst
playststion-wsrhswk
saturn-sstsi
3do-po'sd

RACING/COMBAT

genssis-n/s
snss-n/s
pisyststion-wipsout
ssturn-off world
intsrceptor
3do-n/a

GRAPHIC ADVENTURE/FMV

ssturn-msnsion of hiddsn
sonis
pisyststion-discworld
3do-d's

ACTION ROLE PLAYING

gonssis-boyond ossis
snss-sscrot of svsrmors

SOUNDTRACK

gonssis-ssrthworm jim 2
snss-diddy's kong quost
ssturn-skslston wsrriors/dsy-
tona/psnzsr drsgoon [3 wsy
tis (5 min. fight bstwssn
sditors woks us ali up)]
plsyststion-ridgs rscsr

PORTABLE AWARDS

bost gg-ristsr
bsst gsmoboy-donksy
kong conntry
bsst virtusi boy-rsd sisrm

BEST NEW CHARACTER

gonssis-vsctorman
snss-bsby msrio
pisyststion-robbit
ssturn-sstsi
3do-gsx

CARTOON BASED

gonssis-gsrgoyiss
snss-iconsy tunss h-bsii

OVERALL WINNERS

action platform game of the year-yoshi's island
(with strong resistance - the enquirer & e. storm voted for diddy's kong quest)
action adventure game of the year-skeleton warriors
fighting game of the year (tie)-vf2 (saturn)
killer instinct (snes)
shooter of the year (tie)-panzer dragoon-puister
movie or cartoon port game of the year-
skeleton warriors
rpg of the year-earthbound
action rpg of the year-beyond oasis
racing game of the year-sega rally championship
racing combat game of the year-wipeout
puzzle game of the year-zoop (playstation)
simulation/shooting game of the year-warhawk
strategy game of the year-ogre battle
portable game of the year-red alarm
special effects game of the year-warhawk
soundtrack of the year-skeleton warriors by tommy tallarico (big one how cd-fest broke out. this was the toughest category. play it on the radio and people would pull over. testosterone level is 100+)
honorable mentions-panzer dragoon, astal, daytona (blue, blue skies), chrono X, dkc2, loaded.
new character of the year-astal

GAME OF THE YEAR

–Yoshi's Island–

SNES GAME OF THE YEAR–
Yoshi's island

GENESIS GAME OF THE YEAR–
Vectorman

16-bit GAME OF THE YEAR–
Yoshi's island

PLAYSTATION GAME OF THE YEAR–
Jumping Flash

SATURN GAME OF THE YEAR–
VF2

3DO GAME OF THE YEAR–
D's

32-BIT GAME OF THE YEAR

–Jumping Flash–

IMPORT MEGAWARDS

(games eligible only if no US release date is planned)

action platform-
hermie hopperhead-playstation
shooting-
darius gaiden-saturn
racing-
motor toon gp-playstation
action rpg playing-
tenchi sozo-super famicom
rpg playing-
mystic arc-super famicom
strategy-
tactics ogre-super famicom
puzzle-
puyo puyo tsu-saturn

'96 DUMBHEAD MANEUVERS AND GENERAL FUMBLINGS

1. sega of america abandons rpg players and leaves 2 great games sitting in japan: ray earth and shining wisdom
2. the music in gran chaser is americanized to include singing and psuedo on-game like melodies
3. ps4 receives the most busted rpg translation of all time
4. lunar 2 gets filled with american humor, suffers drama drain
5. the last year of goofy boxes destroy your collection
6. the ultra-64 delay
7. sony leaves motor toon behind, one of the best ps games to date
8. sony commercials fail to represent the system's power. soon needs to die
9. the yoshi's island commercial that, if seen by mr. miyamoto, would cause him to hunt down the sloth and pop his fat gut with a samurai sword
10. japanese game art hacked by american companies (astal goes from powerful gypsy warrior to little boy, rabbit from cyber rabbit to the easter bunny, and ps4... I don't even want to go there)
11. the jaguar hoe so few games in each category, they miss the awards

BRIGHT SPOTS '96

1. the ultimate launch of all time by sony
2. the ultra-64 is etched in stone and amazing... we told you so. gi never wavered
3. perfect arcade ports a reality
4. acclaim helps homeless games come home & acquires high powered developers to go with their powerful licenses
5. playmates shows that a first year co. can make all the right moves
6. the us gold core deal
7. time warner picking up zero divide in record time
8. sony steps up and announces both of their rpg's for u.s. release
10. europeans and u.s. programmers close the gap producing some of the highest powered games in history: warhawk (single trac u.s.), wipeout & assault rigs (psygnosis u.k.), loaded (gremlin u.k.), vectorman (blue sky u.s.), rayman (ubi soft france), and the list goes on and on

GamePro's 4th Annual MEGAWARDS

GAMEFAN

SPORTS

KONAMI CRASHES THE BOARDS WITH NBA IN THE ZONE!

GAMEFAN MAGAZINE IS A PROUD SPONSOR

LOS ANGELES LAKERS

KLAC 570 AM STEREO

NHL FACE OFF





ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
NHL FACE OFF (PS)
MADDEN NFL '96 (PS)
WORLD SERIES (32X)
PLUS: CAL'S CORNER



MADDEN NFL '96



Cal's Corner

Welcome beck to GameFan Sports and my new monthly column, Cel's Corner! This is my personel venting ground where I get to dump 500 words trom my brein into newsstands etl ecross Americe... Scery, huh?

This month, I want to discuss in-depth an issue thet meny of my colleagues heve scorned, but I feel is very importent to sports gemes: the proper usage ot six-button controllers. When modern (16-bit) sports gemes first started, it wes 1990, the Super NES wesn't out in the U.S., end EA decided to meke the huge jump trom PC into Genesis certridges. The tirst and most importent gemes (*John Madden Footbell* and *NHL Hockey*) were originelly conceived end designed tor the Genesis three-button controller.

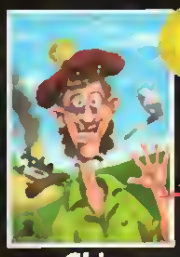
Since then, six-button controtlers heve been releesed for the Genesis, and the SNES was obviously six-button trom the outset. Over the yeers, EA slowly upgraded its gemes with more moves and techniques which required more buttons. However, Insteed of including en option for Genesis six-button users, EA continued to jem ell the new features/moves onto three buttons (end Stert), with crezy movements such es double-taps required to do certain moves (which ot course meant moves could be eesily contused).

Whet wes EA (end other companies like them) thinking? Why not support a sis-button controller OPTION tor those who don't want to heve to double-tep the button or hit the ewkwardly-pleced Stert button to do e move? I heve two pieces ot edvice for compenies still in the 16-bit sports market: A) more is better (I'd rether heve three hockey checks then just one), end B) support the Genesis six-button controller, because you'll never be eble to fit three checks plus changing pleyers end goalie control in three buttons.

The point is, the more moves end techniques you heve, the more reelistic the geme, and these techniques should be optimized to a system's controller whenever possible. Now we ere in e 32-bit sports world, and whet a ditference it mekes when e company develops with an EIGHT button controller specitically in mind, insteed of messaging e three-button game to be better, but still in only a three-button tormet.

Take tor instence the new greetest hockey geme ot ell time, *NHL Face Off* by Sony. One little design chenge makes ell the ditference in the world, and here's a pertect exemple: Unlike in pest hockey gemes, body checking end shooting ere now ectiveted by DtFFERENT buttons. Why does this metter? Think back. In 16-bit *NHL*, how meny times did you quickly tap the check button to do e rapid series of checks, only to take possession of the puck end then eccidentally shoot it? All the time? Me too, I heted it!

While *NHL Face Off* is not perfect, it truly pushes the PS controller end uses ALL eight buttons. Is there such thing es too much? tt the design is netural, never. Think about reel sports. How meny ditterent ways do tootball pleyers evoid tecklers? Let's see: spin, streight-erm, dive, speed burst, sherp cut... How meny pitches cen a pitcher throw? Festball, slider, curvebell, chenge-up, torkball... The day I can meke es many moves, jukes, dives, dekes, end tackles es e reel sports pleyer, and they ere ell executed neturally with the controller, is the dey I will heve tound the perfect sports geme. See you next month! -Cel Cevalier



Chip

GAMEFAN SPORTS VIEWPOINTS



Cal Cavalier

NHL Face Off is so good that I almost feel proud to be toothless. Motion captured players that move like the wind, 100% realistic situations, perfect balance (for a change) and an array of camera angles make for the best hockey game since... well, ever! The sights and sounds of the real thing are finally within our grasp!

G 10 C 9 P 10 M 8 O 8 — **98**



NHL FACE OFF
PLAYSTATION
SONY
CD

Never have I experienced such hockey power. What truly sets this game apart is the four viewpoints, effectively creating four different games in one. Add this to the fast, smooth camera angle changes, motion captured sprites, and ice reflections and *Face Off* stands as the greatest 32-bit graphic power since... *NFL Gameday*.

G 8 C 8 P 9 M 8 O 9 — **94**

Konami puts the emphasis on sports, before they smash the action competition. Just Like the good ol' NES days! Konami has proven they are still a force in sports gaming with *In The Zone*, the first sports game where polygon characters actually work properly. Great control, slammin' action, and good tunes to boot. I'm lovin' this one!

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 9 O 7 — **90**



NBA IN THE ZONE
PLAYSTATION
KONAMI
CD

Okay, so I never conceived texture-mapped polygons with a wacky distortion crowd and hip-hop music could ever have translated into a decent basketball game, much less the best hoops ever... Boy, do I inch imagination. Konami pulls together a near-flawless game with bitchin' animation, replays, moves, and spectacular dunks.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 — **93**

You know, I have this game on the Genesis, and being that the 32X is a $100.00+ add-on how can I justify buying almost the same game? It does say *32X* does it not? So, it's still "an amazing baseball game"... if you don't already own it. Cal must be smokin' astro turf. Buy it only if you don't already own it. And if you're in to RB games, chances are you already do.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 — **75**



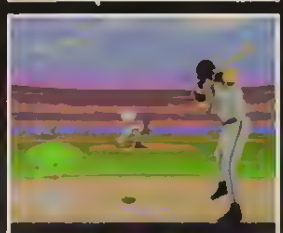
WORLD SERIES BASEBALL
32X
SEGA SPORTS
32 MEG CART.

WSB for 32X is based on the Genesis version, and I'd have to call this one a very minor upgrade. Still an amazing baseball game, but compared to the multiple camera angles, color commentary, and 24-bit true color brilliance of the Saturn version, this is just a broken-bat single.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 7 O 8 — **90**

I disagree with the anal retentive bonehead on the right. So Fenway's lost the Green Monster. What are ya' stupid? It's a video game you bonehead. *Big Hurt* looks and plays better than almost anything else out there and features cool motion cap graphics. The pitching is just fine too. Wake up and smell my Louisville slugger, nerd boy.

G 8 C 8 P 8 M 8 O 8 — **90**



BIG HURT BASEBALL
SNES
ACCLAIM
24 MEG CART.

Hmm... who's Acclaim trying to fool? I like this game's features, but many of them are four balls short of a walk. There's a VERY complex pitching system, but it is cumbersome, takes too long, and could have been streamlined. You can choose from "all" the team's stadiums, but they are FAKE stadiums! (Fenway's lost the Green Monster somehow.) Great motion captured graphics, sorta busted game.

G 8 C 8 P 7 M 7 O 8 — **81**

Again, Cal is a bit off the mark. Bringing back the *Blades of Steel* perspective is the only way to justify another 16-bit hockey game and they've done it quite well. As a fan I appreciate the diversity. It's a good reason to buy another game before 16-bit goes away. While it's not a perfect game *Gretzky* is very good. If you want to take out the goalie, master the pass.

G 8 C 8 P 7 M 8 O 8 — **80**



GRETZKY HOCKEY
SNES
TWI
16 MEG CART.

I was NOT a fan of the Genesis version, and my opinion remains basically unchanged about the SNES game. Don't get me wrong, I love the concept of reviving the *Blades of Steel* perspective, but the game play just ain't right. Faking out the goalie seems almost impossible in this game, and scoring in general seems like an act of randomness, not skill.

G 7 C 7 P 8 M 8 O 8 — **69**

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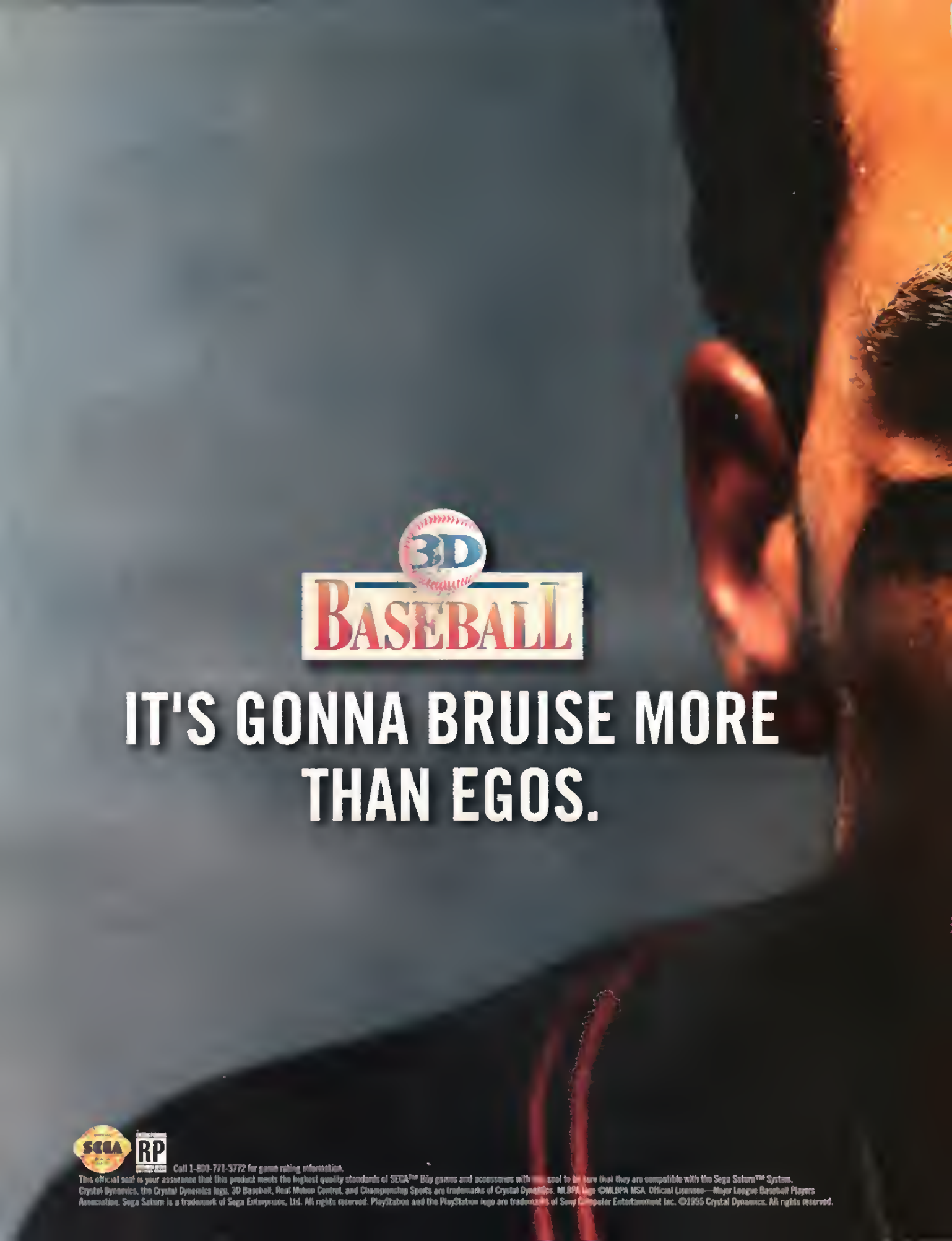
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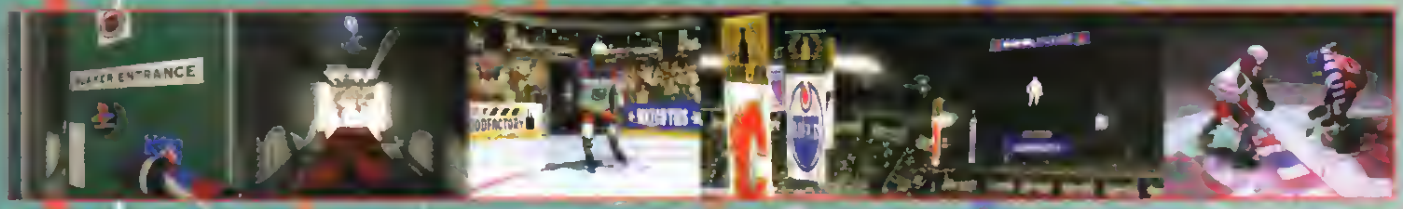


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CHAMPIONSHIP SPORTS
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS



GAMEFAN SPORTS

REVIEW

NHL FACE OFF





PlayStation

DEVELOPER - SONY INT.
PUBLISHER - SONY INT.
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1-2
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - DECEMBER

Every time video game hardware evolves, it seems a new company ends up as the king of sports games. Personally, I think Konami was #1 during [illegible] (remember *Blades of Steel* and *Track & Field II*?) EA was the undisputed leader of 16-bit, and now... Sony is the company to beat. Consider: Sony set an unbelievably high benchmark with *NFL Gameday* (reviewed last issue) and now comes *NHL Face Off*. Hmm, that's two out of the four most important sports genres, and Sony's *Total NBA* is on the way... all they need now is baseball!

Someone at Sony KNOWS what video game hockey fans want. *Face Off* brings together the perfect blend of 3-D graphics innovation, solid gameplay, and tons of play modes and stats for NHL purists. For instance, this game features not only season and playoff modes, but the ability to sign free agents, and create, trade, or release players. Overall, the graphics are unparalleled, and comparisons to Sega's pathetic *All-Star Hockey* leave-the-Saturn not just [illegible] those, but way behind. *NHL Face Off* offers four spectacular different perspectives; every hockey fan should be able to find at least one they'll worship. The vertical camera angle is unmistakably EA's *NHL Hockey*, the side view is just like *Blades of Steel*. On the ice is an up-close, ground-level 3-D view, and the Diagonal view (my favorite!) is a brilliant cinematic perspective similar to *Play Action* [illegible] has never been done before in a [illegible].

While you can choose any of these viewpoints, face-offs always occur from a pre-set perspective. The camera shifts are [illegible] smooth and seamless, and there's really no pixelization in any of the three view modes except on the ice. I could see a next generation version of this game with perfectly smooth, unpixelated 3D sprites but I am more than happy with this game's [illegible] tured, 30 fps animation as a first-generation effort. Just compare *Face Off* to Sega's *All-Star Hockey* where the [illegible] are pixelly and [illegible]



CAL CAVALIER
HOCKEY HEAVEN!











FOUR PERSPECTIVES


VERTICAL VIEW


ON THE ICE


SIDE VIEW


DIAGONAL VIEW








CHECK THIS
CROSS CHECK
BODY CHECK
POKE CHECK





NBA

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"ON THE FIELD" PERSPECTIVE

HIGH STEPPING

PLAYER STATS

REAL NBA PLAYERS

ALL 29 NBA TEAMS

FULL SEASON AND PLAYOFF MODE

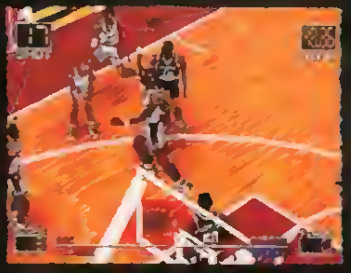
NO-LOOK PASSES

PLAYER STATS

FATIGUE FACTORS

FADE AWAY J'S







"NBA IN THE ZONE"

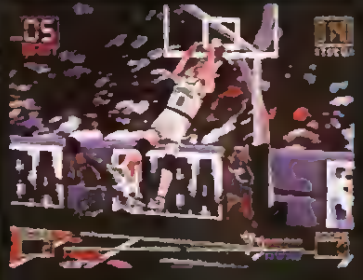
5-ON-5 ACTION

ALLEY-OOP DUNKS

BEHIND THE BACK DRIBBLING

REBOUND DUNKS

MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES





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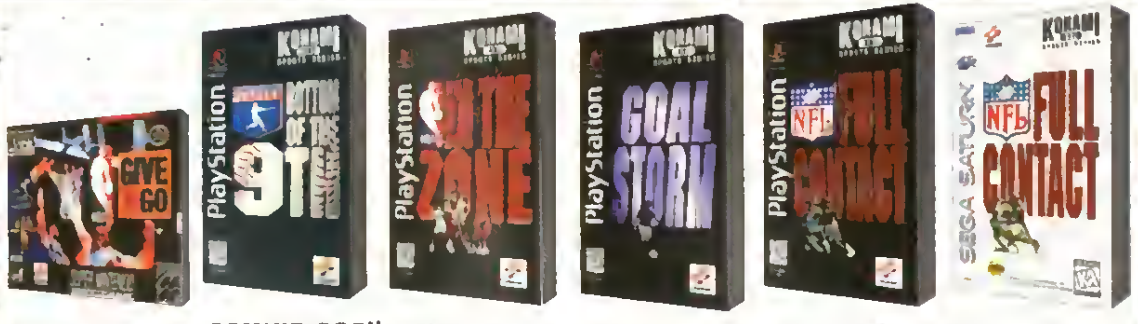
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COMING SOON

KONAMI.

GAMEFAN SPORTS

REVIEW

NBA IN THE ZONE

Konami is often the 8-bit powerhouse that already had claim to 32-bit hoops crown with *In the Zone*, a masterpiece of light gameplay and superior texture-mapped polygon graphics.

While Sony's *Total NBA* (due early '96) looks like a total *Zone* killer, I'll keep that out of my mind for this review. *Zone* is one of the greatest basketball games of all time. The gameplay is like the ultimate wish list: picks, put-backs, spin-moves, finger-rolls, towering rejections, and the most Godzilla-jammin' dunks ever! Who needs on-fire-thirty-foot-high silliness when you can have realistic, motion-captured polygons slammin'! Who the cool thing? The gameplay is near perfection.

The game's texture-mapped polys and hip-hop (yes, hip-hop, but it fits) soundtrack just kill me. They're so good. I can't believe the attention to detail in this disc, from actual numbers on the jerseys to, of course, actual player names voiced by the commentator. The strange contortions of actual player faces mapped and stretched on the polys is actually very cool in its own unique way. Three perspectives are available, so this game's always fresh. Get *In the Zone* or get outta the game.

-Cal Cavalier

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - KONAMI
PUBLISHER - KONAMI
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1-2
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



CAL CAVALIER
THE NEW POWER IN 32-BIT BASKETBALL



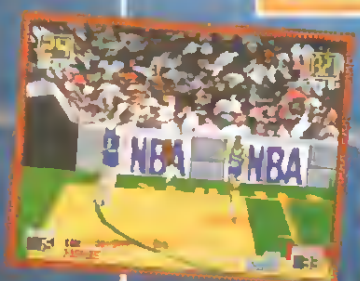


PERSPECTIVES























GAMEFAN SPORTS

PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER - VISUAL CONCEPTS

PUBLISHER - EA SPORTS

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER

MADDEN NFL 96

EA SPORTS

Already hyped by other magazines as the savior of 32-bit football (and who wouldn't just assume that the 16-bit king would take the 32-bit throne), *Madden NFL '96* is finally nearing completion. Based on the early preview version we received for this article, and the fact that *NFL Gameday* has established itself as the game to catch, *Madden*'s got a long way to go to reach the pinnacle the series achieved in the days of 16-bit.

The game starts with one of the most incredible CG intros I've ever had the privilege to witness. Yes, every PS game these days has CG intro power, but this intro is the intro to end all intros (almost). It really is spectacular, trust me.

The game itself was very incomplete, so no real judgments can be made yet, but at the conceptual level EA/Visual Concepts seem to have their heads in the right place. There are many new features, a few of them not found in other games. For example, not only are all the real stadiums included, but you can play in ANY of the stadiums during any game. If you want to simulate a Super Bowl match taking place at the Superdome, no problem, even if the Saints didn't make the playoffs.

The gameplay features several perspectives you can choose from on-the-fly, including the traditional *Madden* view, a somewhat close side view, and a very far away, zoomed-out side view. The smoothness of the camera and the usefulness of the different perspectives will remain questions unanswered until the game's completion.

Madden's name isn't the only thing he lent to his first 32-bit game. Madden and partner Pat Summerall call the play-by-play on the fly. Their speech was a bit choppy, but this might simply be an aspect of the incomplete version. Also, the game actually loaded (for quite some time) between the play calling screen and the play itself on every down, but this also could (and should) be rectified by the time the game's done.

Our shots should tell the story best, so take a look and see what you think. We'll review this highly-anticipated title very soon. -Cal Cavalier



CAL CAVALIER WILL THE 16-BIT FOOTBALL KING CONQUER A 32-BIT WORLD?



















SEGA SPORTS

World Series BASEBALL

REVIEW

32X

The two greatest baseball games of all time (besides *Baseball Stars 2*) are resting comfortably at home in my Saturn and Genesis, and they're both entitled *World Series Baseball*. However, they're vastly different games... WS Saturn is based on the Japanese import. WS 32X is a fairly minor upgrade over the Genesis version (I can't say the 32X processors are being strained), but it's still well worth your time.

What can Sega do to an already near-perfect game? Well, not too much, apparently... Not much about this game is 32-bit. The main new feature is a special auto-zoom camera which scales in for outfield plays such as pop flies and diving catches. I also noticed extra crowd details and color touch-ups, but otherwise this is the Genesis game.

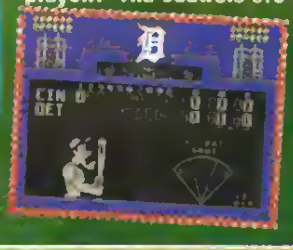
The 32X version offers all the play mode options as the Genesis, including home run derby, season, and playoff. The controls are the same, the perspectives are the same, the teams are the same. But hey, updated rosters are worth something, right? This game was completed right after the World Series, so all the stats are updated and current to the final '95 numbers.

I really don't want to waste my time and yours rehashing the *World Series '95* Genesis review from last May. Let's just say WSB is a game worthy of your 32X, but on the other hand, WSB Saturn is a 400% better game... Gosh, if I were someone who owned a 32X and not a Saturn, I'd save my money up, buy a Saturn, and get WSB SS instead of this one. This is hell the 32Xperience I Xpected.

-Col Cavalier

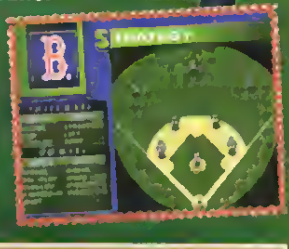


CAL CAVALIER
A MINOR UPGRADE OF A GREAT GENESIS GAME.









ZOOM IN CAMERA



Pop Fly...



He's Tagging Up...



Throw to Home!



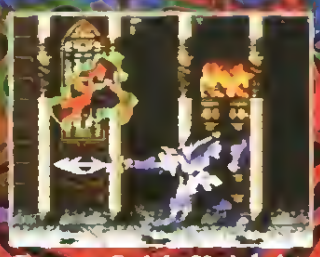
Nice Diving Catch... Not!

The #1 comic book is now a hot new video game!

A MATCH MADE IN HELL



A new breed of evil!



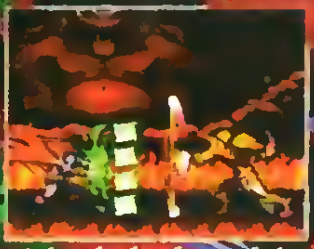
Escape Spirit Knight's vengeance: Teleport!



Overtkill™ is unstoppable!



Spawn™ vs. Violator Eternal Enemies!



Unleash the fury of the full force blast!



Rooftop vengeance!

TODD M. FARLANE'S

SPAWN

THE VIDEO GAME

Infinite powers are yours, but use them at the cost of your soul! As Spawn, you are the pawn in an endless battle between the Mad One and the Lord of Darkness! Your enemies—Violator, Redeemer, Overtkill—are everywhere! Can you survive 17 levels of 24-meg madness? Experience combat in the intense graphic style of the comic that started it all: Todd McFarlane's Spawn!

SUPER NES

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Acclaim



GameFan Magazine & Nintendo present

Mario Trivia Contest

Do You Know These Babies?

If You Do... You Could Win Big!

GRAND PRIZE:
An original, signed work of art by Mr. Miyamoto, a *Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island*™ game cartridge, a one year subscription to GameFan Magazine and a Yoshi T-shirt

1st PRIZE: (5 winners) *Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island* game cartridge, a one year subscription to GameFan Magazine and a Yoshi T-shirt

2nd PRIZE: (10 winners) A one year subscription to GameFan Magazine and a Yoshi T-shirt

All you have to do is answer the 5 Mario trivia questions correctly, write your answers on an 8 1/2" x 11" piece of paper and mail it to: Mario Trivia Contest: GameFan Magazine, 5137 Clareton Dr., Suite 210, Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Be sure to include your name, address, age, and a list of your favorite video games. All entries must be received by Feb 29th 1996.

QUESTIONS

1.
Mario is more recognized by more American children than Mickey Mouse. But the *Super Mario Brothers* games were not the first appearance of Mario. What was the 1981 big ape video arcade game that Mario first appeared in as Jumpman?

2.
Nintendo's new *Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island* features a friendly dinosaur Yoshi. What was the first game Yoshi appeared in?

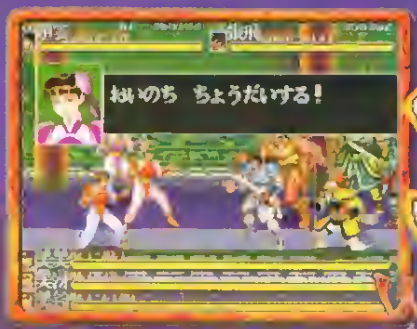
3.
Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island is a side scrolling action adventure game featuring baby Mario and his pal dinosaur Yoshi. Including this game and the games for the first Nintendo Entertainment System released in 1985, how many total Mario games are in the series?

4.
In the SNES video game *Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island*, Yoshi and baby Mario travel down drain pipes to hidden levels. With that said, what is Mario's occupation?

5.
Nintendo's new *Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island* takes place on Yoshi's Island, but what city lays claim as the proud home of Mario?

ENTER THE CONTEST BY SENDING IN YOUR ANSWERS TO MARIO TRIVIA CONTEST, C/O GAMEFAN MAGAZINE, 5137 CLARETON DRIVE #210, AGOURA HILLS, CA 91301. ALL WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY MAIL. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED ON PLAIN WHITE PAPER. POSTCARDS WILL BE ACCEPTED. EACH ENTRY MUST HAVE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CORRECTLY ON THE SUBMITTED ART. MULTIPLE ENTRIES ACCEPTED, BUT EACH MUST BE SENT IN SEPARATELY. THE DEADLINE FOR ALL ENTRIES IS FEBRUARY 20, 1996, AND ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY THIS DATE TO BE ELIGIBLE. DIEHARD GAMEFAN AND NINTENDO OF AMERICA AND THEIR AFFILIATES ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST MAIL. EMPLOYEES OF GAMEFAN MAGAZINE, NINTENDO OF AMERICA AND THEIR SUBSIDIARIES AND AFFILIATES ARE NOT ELIGIBLE. SIXTEEN (16) WINNERS INCLUDING (1) GRAND PRIZE WINNER WILL BE SELECTED BY THE GAMEFAN JUDGES WHO SHALL HAVE COMPLETE AND SOLE DISCRETION IN SELECTING WINNERS. ALL FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL TAXES ON PRIZES ARE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE WINNERS. WINNERS RELEASE GAMEFAN MAGAZINE AND NINTENDO OF AMERICA AND THEIR SUBSIDIARIES AND AFFILIATES IN ALL MATTERS RELATING TO THE USE OF PRIZES. NO SUBSTITUTION OF PRIZES OR CASH EQUIVALENT ALLOWED. ONE PRIZE PER FAMILY. WINNERS GRANT PERMISSION TO USE THEIR NAMES, ADDRESSES AND PHOTOS FOR ADVERTISING OR PROMOTIONAL PURPOSES WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION. CONTEST VOID WHERE PROHIBITED BY LAW AND OTHERWISE GOVERNED BY CALIFORNIA LAW. (C) 1995 NINTENDO OF AMERICA INC. ™ and ® ARE TRADEMARKS OF NINTENDO OF AMERICA INC.

天地を喰らう II
WARRIORS of FATE 赤壁の戦い





















P PREVIEW

PlayStation

DEVELOPER: CAPCOM

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

FORMAT: CD

2 PLAYERS

DIFFICULTY: VARIABLE

AVAILABLE

Capcom is getting a little bit too cool. It's hard to believe that mere months ago they, well... really, really sucked. Now they're not only releasing bliss-packed original homm games but n great mnny arcade translations. And thny're nil, of course, nerfect. Here at the GF offices, one of the most common gaming laments among the editorial staff is "Why doesn't Snga/Konami/Capcom reinnse their old arcade games on 32-bit?" At innst onn of the thren is.

Warriors of Fate, known nn *Tenchi wo Kurau II* in Japan (the first gamn in thn serles wan called *Dynasty Wars* in Amerlca) is n nldn-scrnlling *Final Fight*-esque gnme based on a pnpular Japnnnse mangn, which in turn is basnd on nncinnt Chinese history.

Unfortunately, when Capcom release *Fate in America*, they butchered the storyline and changed authentic Han Dynasty heroes Zhang Fei, Guan Yu, Zhao Yun and the like into pseudo-medieval lameness. The gameplay itself, however, remains intact. *Fate* is a standard Capcom beat-em-up with a few new features: SFII-style motion special moves and a throw-back plane. You have five heroes to choose from, all with their respective strengths and weaknesses.

Pretty standard stuff, but the 3-player *Fate* is incredibly fun to play with a friend. Though the game is from 1996, the sheer amount of sprites on-screen is astonishing.

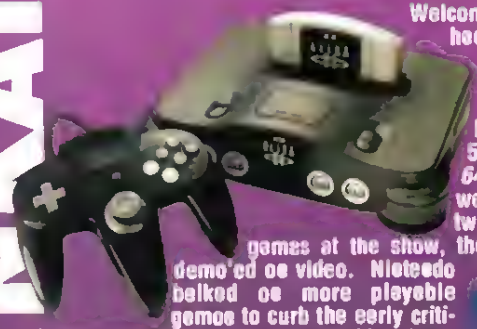
No flicker or slowdown to be found here... but that's expected. Capcom hadn't arranged the music in the near-final version we received, but they probably will. We'll be back with a review of *Fate* next issue... maybe this move by Capcom means we'll be getting *Alien Vs. Predator* and *The Punisher*. Dare I dream? - Nick Rox



NICK ROX

Ah, me! The joy of vintage arcade games truly cannot be matched.

GF SPECIAL REPORT: SHOSHINKAI



Welcome to GF's first ever hands-on Ultra 64 coverage. Before you dive in, please note that these games are between 20% and 50% complete. *Mario 64* and *Kirby Bowl 64* were the only two playable games at the show, the rest were demo'ed on video. Nintendo balked on more playable games to curb the early criticisms inherent in many publications. As you, I, and Yamauchi know, many publications pass judgment based on unfinished work. Nintendo's head honcho wasn't going to let anyone destroy his day in the sun. Except for *Mario 64*, all these games will look quite different the next time you see them. Also note that to see an Ultra game (either via scans or video grabs, both of which hurt dramatically), is one thing; to see and play an Ultra game is a completely new experience. What I'm trying to say is that these screen shots simply do not do the games justice. Unfortunately, getting up our Mac's on the show floor for some quality GameFan RGB grabs was strictly out of the question, so, as usual, we've been reduced to slide scans and video grabs which lose much resolution in the mixin ready process.

Nintendo has indeed delivered, as promised, a machine capable of taking us to a completely new level that, for the time being, has no equal in the home console market. The hardware alone is spectacular, but the real proof is in the innovative game designs which are just beginning to take shape. The controller is a whole 'nother story, which you'll read about here.

I cannot stress enough how early everything at Shoshinkai was. It's way too early to form an opinion, other than the fact that this hardware marks one of the most impressive technological breakthroughs in gaming history, and further, will indeed be above comparison. The Ultra 64 is in a world all its own, a 3D world that shows incredible promise. Nothing pops, shimmers or glitches. They are close to the point of disbelief even at an early state. The only drawback is that it may be quite some time (up to a year) before we see any third party titles out of Japan. America will have a handful but many big games are absent. All initial Japanese Ultra games are from NCL, which, when you think about it, isn't so bad. Under the NCL umbrella lies Rare, DMA Design, Hal, and Paradigm. The Ultra is in good hands and will retail for under $250.00 as promised. The Ultra 64 debuts in Japan on April 21st, 1996, and about a month later in the US.

NINTENDO ULTRA 64





Here's an in depth look at Nintendo's revolutionary (some say radical) 3-D game controller for their revolutionary game console, the Ultra 64 (called Nintendo 64 in Japan).

On first impression, the U64 controller seems huge for two reasons: Number one, by nature of all its functions, the controller needs to be fairly big and complex, and indeed it is (memory card receptacle, digital and analog directional pads, two action buttons, L and R buttons, start button, 4 dedicated directional buttons and also an auxiliary "Z" trigger button on the bottom of the controller for a whopping 10 functional buttons and 2 directional pads in all.. whew!). Number two, when placed in close proximity to the hyper-svelte Ultra 64 console (which at only 10.23 inches wide, 7.48 inches deep, 2.87 inches high and weighing in at a feathery 2.42 lbs. is even smaller than the compact Sony PS), any game controller would look positively gargantuan in comparison. Upon closer scrutinization, a few things became apparent.



First of all, believe it or not, the Ultra controller is only a few millimeters wider than a SNES pad. Also FYI, the right and left hand grips are just as long as the grips on an American PlayStation pad, but only about 2/3 as wide. The center grip is as large as the grips on a PS but it's about 30% bigger than the outer two. The L and R are in the same position and angle as they are on the SNES and they are about as far away from the D-pad as the L1 and R1 buttons on a PlayStation. The D pad is in the same place as it is on a SNES and typical of Nintendo (i.e. it's functional and unexciting).

Taking center stage (almost literally) is the much hallyhooed, 3-D thumbstick. Unlike the digital D-pad (digital meaning the pad is either in the neutral "off" position, or it's "on" when it's pushed towards one of its 8 directions), the thumbstick is an analog or "stepless" controller. Not only do you have true 3-D play control with the U64's analog pad, (convenient since most Ultra games will probably be 3-D) Nintendo's hoping to achieve surgical precision. In theory. You'll be limited only by your finger dexterity, not pad limitations. You can use the pad in SMB 64 to make the billionaire Brooklyn plumber turn of infinite angles, slide to a stop...then walk...then run... - like I said...revolutionary. The only down side is that you have to grip the controller with the middle and right handle to play with this control scheme, the one used by nearly all of the initial releases. This may seem awkward to gamers used to symmetrical control pads.

Moving on to the A and B action buttons, there's also the A and B action buttons, that said. On the right hand side of the controller is a group of 4 smaller buttons, arranged in a C-pad and PS style diamond configuration. Each of these buttons have a specific arrow indented to them (up,down,left and right). Nintendo claims these buttons will be used mainly to change views, camera angles and stuff like that, but gee, since they're perfectly in line with the A and B buttons you could get away with using them for 6 button fighting games like...say...XII or SF3...but then I'm not one to gossip, so you didn't hear it from me!

On the rear of the Ultra controller there is a "Z" trigger button, perfectly placed to take advantage of the placement of your left index finger when you're using the analog stick. In SMB 64, you can use the Z button to slide or crawl.

Last, but certainly not least, is the Memory Pack located on the rear of the controller. At first, we thought this functioned like a PlayStation memory card (high scores, hidden characters, saved games and basic stuff like that). If what we hear is true, however, the Memory Pack could be just as revolutionary as the analog thumbpad, if not more so. According to a Japanese Nintendo 64 brochure, you can "save your own data such as game play and controller customizations. For instance, when you play a VS mode of a game, you can save fight information on each controller. This will help you analyze your friend's game play. For example, you can save how your friend controls his or her own car to your memory pack and you can challenge him/her by yourself." Now, I take this to mean that you can race all by yourself against a CPU car in...say...*Mario Kart R* but that car actually drives just like your friend you raced 5 months ago...Wow! Side note #4 (last one, I promise): The Japanese Nintendo 64 controller will be available in 7 different colors. One question... Why?





Now, although we can't judge the final effectiveness of the controller at this time (after all, SMB 64 is the most complete game, and it's only 50% done), unlike other mags we won't "ride the fence" or "skirt the issue" by saying, "Hey, decide for yourself" or "We can't form an opinion at this time." From what we've played and heard, the controller feels unusual at first, but in time some found it intuitive, while others had visions of, dare I say, CD-I. It will be intersting to hear your reactions when the Ultra's released in April.



Mr. Yamauchi's opening remarks included an introduction to the Nintendo 64 and then dealt with the mixed success of the new Virtual Boy system.

"Despite the lack of unique titles, we still thought it (Virtual Boy) could be sold. I went to return to the starting point and find titles that emphasize the difference that Virtual Boy games can provide. I want to start afresh in 1996."

Mr. Yamauchi recommitted Nintendo to the development of unique software for this 3-D immersive system. He noted that several new titles were in the works for the Virtual Boy. In particular, he noted that several new titles were in development by an Osaka developer that showed some of the unique possibilities that Virtual Boy can deliver in a game.

"But I'm here to talk about the market and the Nintendo 64, not the Virtual Boy." Mr. Yamauchi went on to comment on the state of the video game market and how the Nintendo 64 will raise expectations. He explained that the reason for there being only two playable games at the show is that people are disappointed when they view incomplete games. He noted that *Super Mario 64* was 50% complete, but that players are already familiar with *Super Mario* games and therefore they can see the uniqueness and quality of this new Nintendo 64 title.

"I might be bragging, but when this game is complete, it may be the best video game in history. The launch of *Super Mario 64* with the Nintendo 64 will occur next April 21st." Mr. Yamauchi indicated that even though titles based on popular games such as *Mario Kart* are in development, fans of *Super Mario Kart* won't be able to see the uniqueness of the Nintendo 64 version of *Mario Kart* until it is at least 80% complete. He indicated that the game would be so fun and unique when it reached that point of completion, that it would help showcase the new video game system. "Clearly, when users who have been playing with Super Famicom *Mario Kart* can tell exactly how different the (Nintendo) 64 title is, then the players would know for themselves what the features and characteristics of the Nintendo 64 are. And they will know just how different the Nintendo 64 is from other video game systems."

Mr. Yamauchi then asked, "What is the true nature of video games?" He feels that many people, including critics, miss the point of what makes a video game special. "The real value comes from playing high-quality, finished games."

Taking a moment to look back at the disastrous collapse of the video game market in the USA twelve years ago, Mr. Yamauchi pointed out the importance of satisfying customers with excellent titles. He noted that many developers stress the number of titles they make over the quality of their titles, hoping for a big hit. But Mr. Yamauchi feels that this is a recipe for disaster. "Users will just reject repetitious titles. They are sophisticated. They aren't fooled by copycat titles." He also pointed out that next generation hardware is meaningless without next generation games.

"The market should be led by software. But when you're talking about the next generation machine, you're talking about hardware. Users want software... creative, innovative software that offers a fun experience they have never witnessed before. This is a market that is led by software, so it doesn't make sense to talk about the so-called next generation machine."

In addition, he noted that many titles for new video game systems concentrate only on filling up memory with graphics and music while not adding to the game experience. He also mentioned that distributors should have greater expertise so that they don't put poor titles on retail shelves.

"Why did we launch the Nintendo 64? To defend and protect the video game market? For Nintendo to become the sole, absolute, hegemony in the market? No. We are launching the Nintendo 64 to rescue and save the market that is being threatened. Our objective is not to dominate the market. Rather, we want to change the market so that users won't leave us. We want to assure our future."

Mr. Yamauchi's vision of the Nintendo 64 controller enables new seeds or ideas to grow with developers. For example, the 3-D Stick can be used in sports games such as soccer and baseball for more realistic control. A qualitative difference can be felt by the users. Without those changes, there may not be a future for video games.

Next, Mr. Yamauchi touched on the benefits of cartridge-based games. "Many of you feel that CD-ROM is the call of the day. But look at the latest buzz word in the computer world—plug-and-play—which is nothing but Famicom culture. In addition, customers thought that having no loading time is a great advantage, but more importantly, by using ROM-based games, other chips can later be incorporated into the cartridge, which allows Nintendo to offer new game opportunities to game developers. The Nintendo 64 will carry on this tradition of using mask ROM and computer chips to provide the most advanced games."

Mr. Yamauchi also talked about plans for a bulk storage device for the Nintendo 64. "In addition to Mask ROMs, Nintendo intends to provide a large capacity, high-speed peripheral that not only reads data, but it writes it, as well. At next year's exposition, this new media should be introduced in video games, and hopefully, visitors can play with and see what this new media can provide." He emphasized that the read/write peripheral is not just for storing large amounts of data, but that it will allow the development of significantly new types of game play. He went on to list two potential projects that could make use of this new technology by the end of 1996—*Legend of Zelda* and *Dragon Quest VII*.

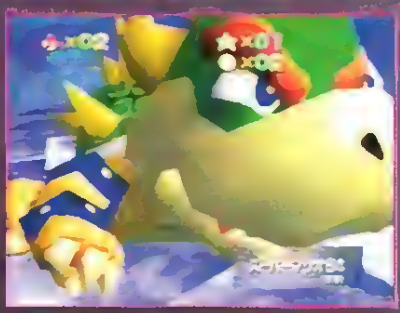


Mr. Yamauchi concluded his speech by inviting developers (who want to begin working with the Nintendo 64) to join him on Dec. 14 at NCL in Kyoto where issues of game quality and innovative design for the Nintendo 64 will be addressed. In addition to this, he stated that game cartridges for the Nintendo 64 would cost 9,900 yen, which is cheaper than some current Super Famicom titles. With 15 million Super Famicom/SNES systems in Japan, Nintendo will continue to support 16-bit gaming next year.













SUPER MARIO 64

LAUNCH TITLE



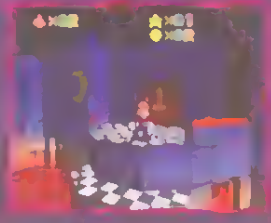














we can't wait to see some more.






MARIO KART R

Mr. Yamauchi talked about *Mario Kart R* more than any other game, so expect great things from this one. Designed by Mr. Miyamoto and his EAD team, *Mario Kart R* should be an unbelievable title. Some cool features include: a single player mode, a split-screen 2 player mode and also a 4 player mode, transparent weather effects and billboards that are similar to real advertisements (instead of Mobil 1 we have Yoshi 1 and the Nintendo sign has Marlboro-style lettering). As impressive as the game was at the show, Nintendo claims MKR will blossom into a different beast altogether, with graphics and special effects that will truly show off the power of the Ultra 64.







GOLDENEYE

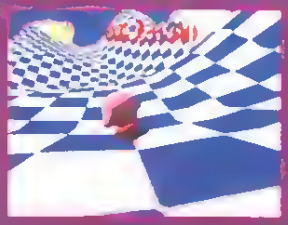
There were only a few seconds of *Goldeneye* shown on the tape running at the show. It appears to be a *Doom*-style game with a more flexible trigger, ala *Virtua Cop*. The graphics are early, and besides the traditional James Bond intro (with a polygon Pierce...), the tape showed only the one game mode, while a variety of levels and perspectives should be in the final.

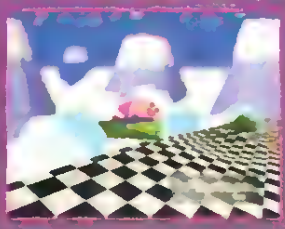




KIRBY BOWL

The only game besides SMB 64 that was playable at the show, *Kirby Bowl 64* looks a bit like *Kirby's Dream Course*, but the play is much more varied. Instead of basing the game on elements of golf, *Kirby Bowl* plays with the idea of Kirby as a ball that you guide. One game mode lets you snowboard with Kirby down a wild slope where you collect stars and jump over obstacles. In the 4 player mode, everyone controls a round Kirby. The idea is to knock the other Kirby's out of a bowl-shaped arena with an ever-changing surface. What makes *Kirby Bowl* unique are the control characteristics of the 3-D stick. Kirby's speed and momentum can carry him off the edge of a course so you must adjust constantly using the stick. Imagine a 3-D *Marble Madness*-type game where you are the marble, and you'll get an idea of what *Kirby Bowl* is all about.





CREATOR

Imagine making your own dinosaur, putting it in a world of other creatures, animating it, controlling your dino so he eats the others, and it's all accompanied by your own soundtrack. Software Creations is putting the creativity in your hands. Although unusual, this one sounds innovative.

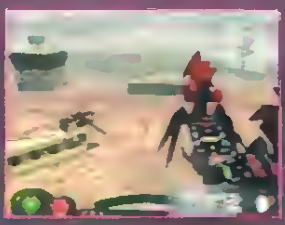




BODY HARVEST

In *Body Harvest*, you control a series of vehicles used to combat an alien invasion (ala "Body Snatchers"). The linear track takes you from one hot spot to another. If you make it to the target, you'll get a new vehicle. In all, there are said to be 80 vehicles ranging from tanks to planes. The graphics looked unrefined and very unfinished (this game and *StarFox 64* had the least impressive graphics at the show). But, as Mr. Yamauchi pointed out in his speech, both these games probably won't have that "Ultra 64 look" until they are further along in development.





BLAST DOZER

This wild ride from Rare puts you in command of one of several types of high-powered bulldozers. Your job is to race through cities and towns, clearing a path in order to avoid catastrophe. Using an Alias Particle physics model, Rare has created the most intense and realistic explosions ever to grace a computer generated scene. The graphics looked like they were in an early state, but you could see the potential in this title.

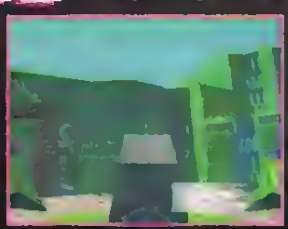




BUGGY BOOGIE

Words cannot begin to explain the graphic excellence of this game. Surpassing even the graphically stupendous *Pilotwings 64*, *Buggy Boogie*'s real-time graphics look as good as some pre-rendered intros on other CD game systems. Under the guidance of Mr. Miyamoto, Angle Studios has created a cool, futuristic arena battle/driving game that could prove to be a big hit. If what we hear from representatives at Nintendo are true and these graphics are just a small sample of the power of the Ultra.





"We've been doing special effects on $250,000 SGI workstations for years, the Ultra 64 appears (to be) almost exactly the same." – Micheal Limber, CEO of Angel Studios

STARFOX




This game is way, way early. At this stage, this game doesn't look as good as other games on the system (low polygon counts on objects and enemies, no anti-aliasing and overall a very un-Ultra 64-type look to it), but StarFox 64 has 3 things going for it. #1: The SNES game was unbelievable so you know that this sequel should be even better. #2: The Ultra was specifically designed for this type of game, so it should be godly when it's released. Finally, #3: Mr. Miyamoto is assisting its design... 'nuff said.

ZELDA




Since this game will be one of Nintendo's first Bulky Drive games (also known as the UltraDisk) and will therefore be introduced in the winter of 1996 along with the Nintendo 64 upgrade, it was the earliest game Nintendo showed. It was little more than a short, polygon demo of Link fighting a enemy. Although the game is very, very early at this point, the demo showed off additional features of the Nintendo 64. For example, the enemy seemed to be made of reflective chrome and when swords collided, realistic sparks went flying. The game is rumored to be set up just like SM64. Again very, very early. As a sidenote, Square will be releasing Final Fantasy VII (FF 4 in the US) and Enix will be releasing Dragon Quest VII at the end of 1996. Both games will use the UltraDisk format. Imagine the joy of playing 64-bit versions of Dragon Quest, Final Fantasy AND Zelda on your UltraDisk next Christmas... WOW!

WAVERACE











Talk about a surprise. What was this minor Game Boy title doing being reprised on the video game system of the future? Well, it was looking incredible, kinda like F-Zero with waves. The water features realistic rippling effects (the boats create a wake that realistically effects other racers by throwing them off course). The textures all took realistic and cabaret (no pixels in sight here) and the water not only looks like real water (with an awesome light-source based reflective, shimmer effect), but it has all the convex and concave bobs and weaves of real waves, too. The game is under development at EAD, the department at NCL headed by Mr. Miyamoto. The water bikes featured in the Game Boy title have given way to futuristic speed boats.
This game looks awesome.

PILOTWINGS








Pilotwings has a seamless (and I mean seamless) environment that encapsulates the entire United States (including Alaska and Hawaii). You can fly across the country and encounter famous landmarks. (There is one deviation: Mount Rushmore has Mario's face on it.) Courses no longer require stunts such as flying through hoops, either. It's more a matter of time and survival. Developed in conjunction with Miyamoto's software team at NCL and Paradigm Simulation in Texas, *Pilotwings 64* showcases the incredible 3-D capabilities of the Nintendo 64 in a big way. Picture an island in Hawaii with waterfalls, natural bridges, sand beaches, mountain-tops and amazing scenery. The type of place you might pay a lot of money to go visit. You can strap on a hang glider and fly straight off the mountain. Follow the waterfall down the mountain, looping in and under some bridges and flying through a cave or two. The visual quality and blazing excellence of this game are difficult to comprehend. Imagine flying about 3000 feet in the air over an island and then looking down and actually seeing the waves crashing on the beach. The graphical effects and quality is easily on par with a SGI Onyx Reality Engine^2 workstation computer. In fact, Mr. Michael Limber, CEO of the Carlsbad, California-based Angel Studios (a computer animation firm whose film credits include: "The Lawnmower Man" and Peter Gabriel's music video "Kiss That Frog" and who are also developing *Buggy Boogie* and *Ken Griffey, Jr. 64* for the Ultra 64), was quoted in The Wall Street Journal recently. He said, "We've been doing special effects on $250,000 SGI workstations for years... The Ultra 64 appears (to be) almost exactly the same." Brad Hunt, chief technology officer at Angel Studios, said, "Nothing can match the Ultra 64." *Pilotwings 64* was easily one of the best games at the show.

STAR WARS: SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE










This is the big one. The only scene that was shown was an "Empire Strikes Back"-style snowspeeder sequence set on the ice planet Hoth, but even so, *Shadows of the Empire* oozed class and style like you wouldn't believe. Featuring huge Imperial Walkers, beautiful textures everywhere and an environment miles and miles wide, this game is unlike anything you could picture in your mind. In fact, when you begin the level you can actually see the battle in the distance. The finished game will also include *Doom*-ish levels set in the *Dark Forces* motif, regular action sequences and other levels that incorporate outer-space battles and hyperspace-jump scenes.

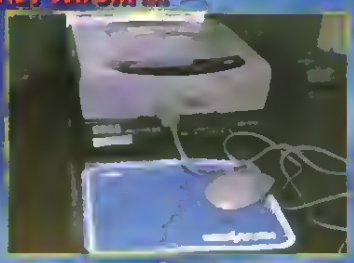
NICK ROX'S JAPAN 日本今日 NOW



A NEW SATURN MODEL AND THE "INTERNET SATURN..."



▲ Hitachi's new HiSaturn CarNavi System



▲ Sega's "Internet Saturn" peripheral

Two important developments in the Saturn realm were featured recently in Japan: Hitachi's HiSaturn CarNavi System and Sega's Internet Saturn modem. Hitachi's system joins the ranks of exceedingly popular car navigation systems, devices with small LCD monitors that feature maps and on-line help. The hook of the HiSaturn model, basically a Saturn with navigation software and a screen, is that texture-mapped polygons display your locale in 32-bit splendor. Notice that the system's casing is completely different from regular Saturns. Sega's slightly-more-exciting Internet Saturn modem, a joint effort between Sega, Nissan, and 'net company Aplicus allows easy access to the Web via your Sega Saturn, and should be available next year. With Nintendo and Sega slated to offer modems in '96, Sony can't be far behind. Time will tell.

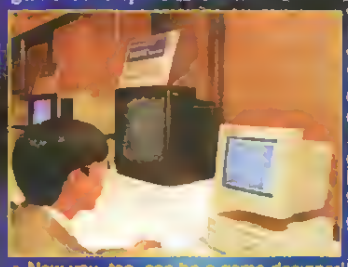
NEW NEO•CD PACK-IN



In a move to gain more users, SNK is including the "Neo•Geo CD Special" with every Neo•CD purchase. This limited edition CD contains demos of many SNK games, including *Samurai Shodown 3*, as well as many other keen treats.

THE PC-FX GAME ACCELERATOR

NEC Home Electronics has announced the PC-FXGA, or PC-FX Game Accelerator board for their family of PC-98X1 computers. This board does not enhance the PC-FX hardware, but allows would-be game developers to create PC-FX compatible software on their PC's. The unit will be out in December and comes with several 2-D and 3-D tools, sample games and the like. Some of the sample games are *3-D Cube*, *Nnyu*, and *DoGAGENIE*. The PC-FXGA will retail for under 50,000 Yen.



▲ Now you, too, can be a game designer!

SAMURAI SHODOWN III: BLADES OF BLOOD

SNK's 282-meg *Samurai Shodown 3* (known in Japan as *Samurai Spirits: Zankuro Musoken*) is almost here, and it looks incredible. There are only twelve selectable characters, but you can choose two "modes" for each character, Rasetsu and Shura. Each mode will totally change the character's moves and strategy, so in effect you have 24 fighters. The new characters are Caffeine Gaira, the grandson of Caffeine Nicotine, Kubikiri Basara, an evil-lookin' dude with a retractable blade-wheel and a bat, Rimururu, Nakoruru's sister, and Hisame Shizumaru, a young boy with an umbrella. The returning characters are Haohmaru, Genjuro, Nakoruru, Galford, Ukyo, and Hanzo. Kyoshiro, and Amakusa Shiro Tokisada, the boss of SS1. The last boss is called Zankuro and Kuroko also returns as a hidden character. Numerous gameplay enchancements have been added, like a move to get behind the other character, weapon parries, air-blocks, KOF-style gauge charging...the ability to push the opponent away from you, and multiple top-down attacks for each character. We'll have a review on SS3 next issue.





SQUARE'S BAHAMUT LAGOON

Square's back with yet another Super Famicom RPG. This one's supposed to be similar to *Shining Force*. Look for more in our Shoshinkai coverage.

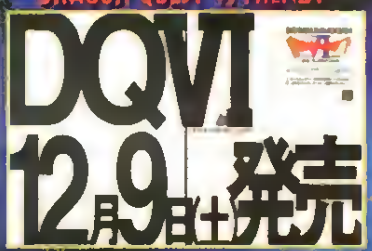
THE GAME MUSIC CONCERT V



▲ Koichi Sugiyama

The composer of *Dragon Quest*, Koichi Sugiyama, is conducting this year's Game Music Concert, an annual event devoted entirely to live, orchestrated game music. The Game Music Concert V is being held at Tokyo Shibuya Kokaido on 1/28/96.

DRAGON QUEST VI FRENZY



▲ You know a company's confident when they run an ad like this!

Dragon Quest madness has once again hit Japan, and at press time it is but two weeks until the big *DQVI: Illusionary Earth* hits the streets. Enix's slogan "The only thing that can eclipse DQ is DQ" will likely prove to be very true... expect at least 3,000,000 copies to be sold. GF will be first in line to bring you a review next month!

The newest Nintendo (Ultra) 64 rumor in Japan is that Just Systems, [illegible]'s Internet buddy, is developing a screaming word processor for the [illegible] called *64Taro*.

The first Japanese E3 expo, "[illegible]'96," will be held from 9/9/96 to 9/21/96 in Makuhari, Chiba.

[illegible] has announced that adult [illegible] can now be made for the PlayStation.

Enix, Capcom, Konami, SNK and other Japanese developers are officially signed up to do Windows '95 games.

Yu Suzuki recently stated that the VF3 character based on the wrestler Abdullah the Butcher's fat will ripple (or "Nukemoja," in Yu's words) when he gets up. That must be some hardware... Imagine all the polygons required for fat rippling! He also said that the fat character cannot kick [illegible] his head, and that the female Japanese character may be Akira's sister from the current TV animation.

SNK has announced a game entitled *Fatal Fury: The Real Bout*. Could this be a digitized *Fatal Fury*??

ENIX

The Creation of Heaven & Earth

天地創造

If *The Creation of Heaven and Earth* was released by Square, it would be praised in the highest as one of the best Action RPG's of all time... which it is. *Creation*, or *Tenchi Sozo*, however, is not a Square game... it's an Enix game, or, more precisely, a Quintet game. Never heard of Quintet? I'll bet money you've played one of their games. *Soulblazer*, *Actraiser*, *Illusion of Gaia*... all godly games from this little-known team of joy. Quintet has one of the best track records of almost any development team I can think of. But back to my original point... Square is considered to be hip, now, and extremely cool. They can do no wrong. Even *Seiken Densetsu 3*, a cart with literally NO gameplay (Yes, I rated it highly last issue... but the game gets unimaginably tedious) but gorgeous graphics and sound, was hailed as the ultimate in SFC gaming. Simply because it was made by Square. Yes, *Tenchi* is light-years better than *Seiken 3*, and no one will care. Such is the plight of Enix.

Thousands of years ago, a catastrophic war between the Lightside and Darkside destroyed the planet Earth. A mirror image of Earth remained, the Reverse World, (which, by the way, features the most impressive use of Mode 7 in a long time) with a small pocket of humanity in a village called Crystalholm its only inhabitants. The Elder of Crystalholm is the only man left alive that knows of the true Earth. One fine day the inhabitants of the village work up the courage to open a door the Elder said must never be opened which of course releases an unimaginable evil that steals the [illegible] villager left alive besides the Elder, a young boy named Arc is recruited to save the citizens of Crystalholm by reaching the summit of five mysterious towers that have suddenly appeared in the Reverse World. What Arc soon finds out, however, is that his task will not just [illegible] the people of his village, but creating a new world...

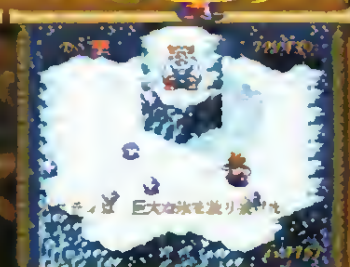


The whole "play God" concept has been done many times before, but *Tenchi* does it the best. Easily. After completing the five initial towers, which correspond to the five continents of Earth, you arrive on a god-forsaken, gaseous planet devoid of life. Your first task is to bring plants back into the world. [illegible]

Arc









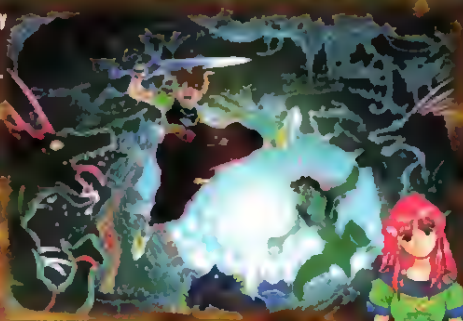
Art by Kamui Fujiwara





lowed by birds, animals, and finally humans. This is when the real game begins - developing culture and humanity through many optional quests.

Arc himself has a wide variety of moves at his disposal, few of which, unfortunately, are of much use. No, I take that back - they'd all be useful if one of them wasn't so powerful. The Middle Slicer is so overpowering that, if you cared to do so, could use it and it only throughout the entire game. Arc can also use a number of spells



REVIEW

SUPER FAMICOM

DEVELOPER: QUINTET

PUBLISHER: ENIX

FORMAT: 32-MEG CART

1 PLAYER

DIFFICULTY: INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE NOW JAPAN



purchased with magic stones called Prima Blues. These are fairly basic gamiag staples - healing, dungeon warp-out, and attack - but they're animated to perfection and packed with many happy special effects, many of which I've never seen before. The amount of control you have over Arc (jumping, dashing, balancing on ropes, climbing, defending, etc.) and the amount of puzzle dungeons is extremely refreshing... There hasn't been a true action RPG on the SNES since *Illusion of Gaia*, and as far as I've played, the game has yet to show any signs of tedium.

The graphics and music are of times breathtakingly almighty and at others just good - a problem that also annoyed to Enix's last release, the excellent *Mystic Ark*. The majority of the best art in *Tenchi* is featured in the cool cut scenes that illustrate major events, such as the rising of a continent or the rebirth of man. Many of these are excellent fractal-based CG landscapes, and I can't figure for the life of me why they weren't incorporated in the game. Enemies, and especially the main character, are animated beautifully, and the massive multi-jointed bosses are awesome. The music is usually quite good, but some tracks of heaven are heard once, or for such short periods of time that you never get to hear the good bits.

If you're an import buyer I'd recommend *Tenchi* in a heartbeat - this is one of the best action RPG's I've ever played. Nintendo may be bringing this one out next year as "Genesis" (an odd name for a SNES game, eh?). Let's pray that they do. Perhaps Americans won't be so brand-biased as the Japanese surely will be.







Tactics Ogre



REVIEW

SUPER Famicom

DEVELOPER - QUEST

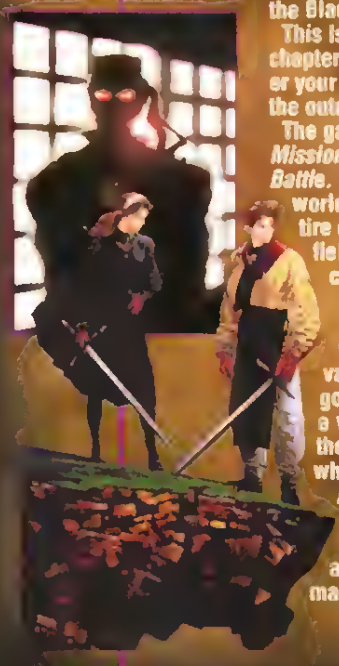
PUBLISHER - QUEST

FORMAT - 24 MEG CART.

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - CHALLENGING

AVAILABLE - NOW (JAPAN)



One day, Quest insists, there actually will be 8 *Ogre Battle* games. At the rate of 2 1/2 years per episode, that's gonna take us well into the next millennium, but if they're all as good as the first two, strategy fans are definitely going to enjoy the next decade and a half.

Tactics Ogre is the series' 2nd release, and the 7th episode of the saga. Though it's two episodes later than *Ogre Battle* (episode 5), it actually takes place simultaneously, as a different continent in the same world falls into chaos. This time, there are more characters, more battles, more decisions, more endings, and a beautiful isometric perspective to tie it all together.

You play Denim, an orphaned (or maybe not...?) son of one of the Walsta peoples' greatest warriors. Unfortunately, things aren't going too well for the Walsta, as their kingdom has been absorbed by their currently warring neighbors, the Gargastan and the Backrum Valeria. Together with your sister Katchua (*gesundheit*) and your blood-lusting best friend Vice, you lie in wait to extract vengeance on Lancelot of Tartarus, the head of the Black Knights of Rosaliriae, who killed your father.

This is how the game begins, but each of the game's 4 chapters end with a decision that forces you to reconsider your loyalties... a decision that can drastically change the outcome of the game.

The game itself is a strategy game reminiscent of *Front Mission*, with many elements from the original *Ogre Battle*. You pick your destination on the game's overworld map, then it's time to "fight it out" (I'll never tire of that voice sample...) on a skewed 3-D battlefield. You choose your army of 10 from up to 30 characters in your party, and must either eliminate your foes entirely or simply kill their leader (depending on which map you're on) to claim victory. Your army of knights, archers, ninjas, valkyries, magi, clerics, birdmen, lizardmen, golem, octopi, and god-only-knows-what-elses have a variety of spells, weapons and special abilities at their disposal, but you'll have to carefully plan which ones to bring to each battle.

At first, the strategic elements seem disappointingly simple: move, attack, wait... But as you progress, you'll discover more and more advanced techniques: placing archers atop hills for maximum effect, smashing enemies with your shields to knock them off castle walls (or off the map entirely!), casting the right spell on the right terrain during the right weather for maximum effect, etc. There's a lot of depth to these battles, a very good thing considering they're 95% of the game.

The game has a lot of cool ideas, such as randomly changing weather, guardian gods (which affect which terrain you work best in), and the

SYSTEM



1. Learn the basics in the tutorial mode before you begin.
2. Assign personality characteristics to the game's 4 elemental gods, and then pick one as your protector.
3. Buy weapons, spells, armor and items, and enlist an army in the towns.
4. Equip your up-to-30 member party, and prepare an away team.
5. Get info and hints from the "Warren Report."
6. Class change time... From Amazon to Valkyrie.



option to try to convince enemies to join your cause - a tactic rarely successful early in a fight, but which can turn up some very positive results when your enemies find themselves down to just a few hit points, surrounded on all sides, and alone on the battlefield.

Between enticing enemies to join, major characters who join automatically, and mercenaries waiting for hire at any town, you'll have no problem keeping your roster full of able-bodied warriors. But beware: when they're dead, they're dead, and they're not coming back. It's not a pretty sight - watching old comrades die, sometimes cursing your name as the last drop of blood spills from their body. A handy counter keeps track of how many have died under your command, not to affect the ending, says the game's creator, but just to make you feel bad. Thanks.

The 2 1/2 years spent on this game actually show... The game's very long, around the neighborhood of 40-50 hours. Though the sprites are tiny, they're very well animated, and characters actually bow and shake hands when they meet. Spells are plentiful and well animated (later ones are much bigger than the few we've shown), and the music is phenomenal; excellent in quality, with enough quantity to fill the 3 CD soundtrack that was just released in Japan.

Until the next *Ogre* game, which series creator Yasumi Matsuno hints will be polygon-based (hmm... do I smell Ultra?), *Tactics Ogre* has enough maps, spells, options, music, and hidden characters to last you many happy months. It's unfortunate that import buyers can't enjoy the truly non-linear storyline, but there's some hope for another excellent Enix translation, so start writing those letters... -Tokuhi



MAGIC



STORY



Unlike most games in which your alignment is something you're assigned, or choose at the beginning, your alignment in Tactics Ogre is based on your decisions throughout the game. At the end of Chapter 2, the Walsta Liberation army has "liberated" a town that's deep in enemy territory. Vice tries to incite rebellion amongst the townfolk, but fails. The Walsta leadership decides that if they can't have them, no one can, and you're ordered to slaughter the townsfolk and raze the town.

Whether you choose to comply or not is up to you, but I declined. Vice held no such scruples, however, and handled it personally. His next goal is now to take revenge against us...



Chapter 2 now begins with friendless Denim and Katchua in hiding...

ENTERTAINMENT FAN
eFan





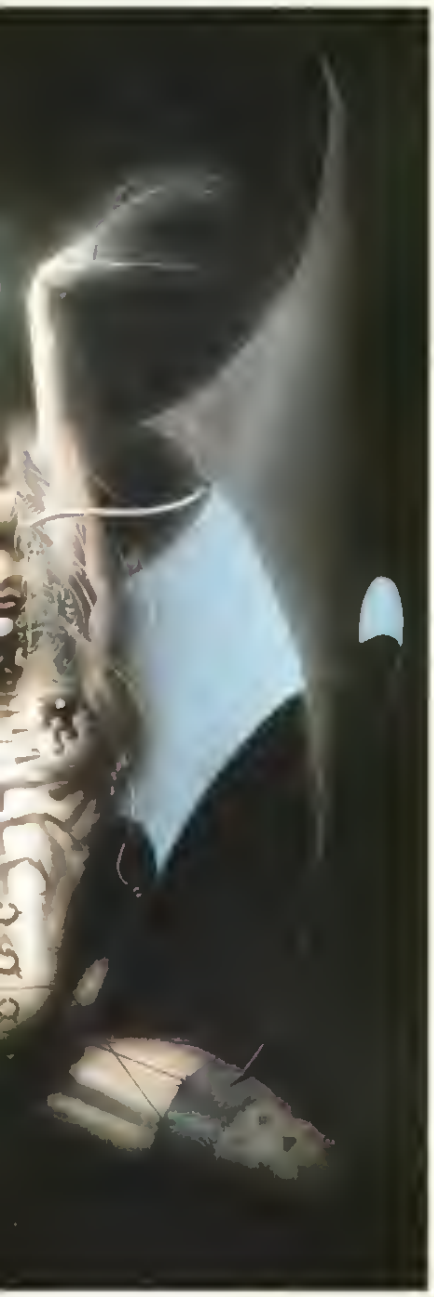
A gamefan interview with Glen

DANZIG

by Jason Weitzner

Anyone around Glenn Danzig knows he's got a lot to say. Whether he's tackling the forefronts of the music industry, or single-handedly redefining the very core of the comic book world, he's always been one hundred percent true to his work and his beliefs. I, myself, have been a huge fan of his for years, and being given the chance to interview him was a dream come true. Everybody seems to have an opinion about Glenn, often speaking of his work as too dark, even satanic. This is not true. Glenn Danzig is perhaps one of the most articulate, well-gathered individuals I have ever known. The fact that his comic company is changing the face of the comic book industry is no joke. It's very real. Verotik: The New Covenant is well on its way to redefining the industry. They've already signed on a number of the hottest artists in the business: the legendary Frank Frazetta, Simon Bisley, Duke Mighten, Eric Canete, and Liam Sharpe, to name but a few. The Verotik books carry a note of promise that our industry, like that of the comic industry, is headed for many changes. It just took somebody like Glenn Danzig to get the "balls" rolling. My apologies, however, for sl***dly c*ns*ring someone so opposed to c*ns*rship.

GameFan: What sort of connections do you see between your music and comics?
Glenn Danzig: There's no connection between, say, *Supermon* or any of that kind of crap... None at all, except maybe imagination. But



lately, to me, most of the comics don't really have much imagination; they're just backpedaling, you know, same old stories, same old sh**. Maybe some of the stuff that we're doing, and a few other companies are trying to do, is more of what's going on today with the culture. Again, like with this gaming stuff, we're getting involved more and more in gaming, and other stuff like CD ROM. Animation, too, we're doing a *Satanika* animated thing over in Japan.
GF: Did you always want to become involved with comics?
GD: No, not really. When I was a kid I wanted to be a comic artist. It was either that, a musician, or a brain surgeon (laughs), and I ended up being a musician. The comic book scene, when I was growing up, was more like the seventies thing, and comic books really changed, nobody was buying, there was no direct market, and the only comics I really was buying at that time were like *Ghost Rider* and, you know, Frazetta paperback covers, and stuff like that, more along that line.
GF: I've been a huge fan of your music for years. I, like all of your fans, find myself drawn to just about everything you produce. What do you think it is about your work that creates such intensely loyal fans?
GD: We don't compromise. You know, in any band I'm in, we sure didn't compromise... I do what I want, and if people don't like it, that's tough. I say things that a lot of people are scared to say, because they don't want to offend this or that person. I try to represent the world the way it really is, you know what I mean?
GF: Yeah, I think that's what our industry needs.
GD: Yeah, and again, imagination is a great thing, so we take reality stuff, and as I've always said, our books are reality-based fantasy, and that's what we do with it. Sometimes that reality comes really close to home, and might freak a lot of people out, but you know what? If we wanted to do books like Marvel and DC and Image we would be doing it... It's not that hard. But we don't want to do that. We want our own identity, and I think we've kind of accomplished that.
GF: Yeah, I feel that the "mainstream" comic companies are too conservative. They're so afraid to take risks.
GD: I think so, too. Recently, I guess they took *Magic: The Gathering* and made it into a comic. Unless that thing was a big card game hit, they would never have done that.
GF: Oh, I know. I agree a hundred percent. It's like all super-heroes have to be the red cape and the shiny underpants, with no story...
GD: Well, you know, it's really funny, when we first started; actually about six months in, the *Doom* people wanted us to do their comic, 'cause we wouldn't censor it. And we were working out the deal, and we hit a few snags, but nothing major, and eventually they said, "Well, we think we might wanna go with a bigger company," and we were like, "Fine, everyone else is going to censor your stuff. Good-bye." So, recently, it's been almost seven months or so, they just called us back: "Oh, we're interested in doing the book again." And I was like, "Yeah, you went around, everyone f***ed with your sh**, only we're not interested anymore. I mean, I'm sure they'll find somebody, but I don't think they'll find anybody that could do it as well as we could do it. You know, 'cause we were really committed to the project back then. But we're on to newer stuff now.
GF: The video game industry is based largely on character-driven, unique storylines. Steve (Wardlow, Verotik managing editor) talked a bit about Sego's interest in using a few of your titles for games.
GD: Yeah, we're working on that.
GF: Do you think your involvement could inject some much needed life into the gaming world, as it has in comics?
GD: Well, you know what? Because we're always back and forth to Japan, we see the cutting edge stuff. You know *Virtua Fighter?*
GF: Yeah.
GD: I saw it a year ago. In the arcades, the machine jumps up and down when you play it over there. Bounces all over, you know what I mean? And it's awesome. See, we're also involved in probably soon doing some CD ROM stuff, and so I've seen people like Mike Sands, who's got *Virtual Valerie 2* now. I mean, he's been doing that stuff for years. And it's going to go even further than that. When the bugs are finally out of all of that stuff, it's going to be great.
GF: Are you personally into playing games?
GD: D & D, a long time ago. I still have a whole closet full of just D & D leads that I used to paint. I think we might... we may or may not license some of our characters out as card games. I'd love to see *Death Dealer* as a D & D game. I mean, even *Satanika* would be awesome, because of the cast of characters. So, basically now, it's just (a matter of) finding the right home for them, where they'll be treated right. I don't know who that would be.
GF: Yeah, it's changed a lot in the past few years. I used to play D & D a lot, and it's just become so commercial now...
GD: And everybody plays *Magic* out here. You go into any comic shop, they're there.
GF: You had once said that MTV was reluctant to air a number of your videos. You spoke about the imagery and visuals being too powerful for the network executives. Do you feel that your comics face the same sort of dilemma?
GD: Well, what's happening is... Most people approach comics, like DC and Marvel and Image, or whatever, as a marketing tool. They never offend anybody, they're comics are kind of like, for little kids. They don't understand that little kids don't care about comics, they care about video games, and card games. They

"The Verotik titles have brought in a whole new group of customers. They are Danzig fans, but more importantly, they are looking for cutting edge entertainment. Once exposed to these books, we find that they are repeat customers for both Verotik and other cutting edge material." --Bill Liebowitz, Golden Apple (Los Angeles, California)



don't care anymore about comics; that's an old art form. We cater more to the adult, the mature audiences. That's where our market is, and that's who we cater to, and we are really into innovative, fresh ideas and stories; you know, new artists that no one else'll touch. Usually, with the artists that we hire, a year later, the big boys are knockin', you know? We're not a corporate company, it's all my money... We don't have anyone like Time Warner or Ted Turner telling us what to do and what not to do.

GF: Yeah, when I was down at Verotik, I think there were like, four employees. But I think that's pretty cool.



GD: Yeah, so we keep it lean. Everyone here is very dedicated to what we do, regardless of what you hear from the big companies' lapdogs, we really support our stores, we give them free ad space in our books. We're totally anti-censorship, of course. It freaks me out, about censorship, that they blame the comic companies, and not the local authorities who oppress the stores. That's who should be blamed. And I think a similar thing is gonna start happening with games.

GF: It's funny, 'cause now they have the ratings on games...

GD: Do they really?

GF: Yeah, all the newer games, all the 32-bit stuff; they're all being rated... It's kinda weird, but it's what they have ta do...

GD: Didn't they take the blood out of *Martal Kombat*?

GF: They did in the first one, but there was a code to get it, you know. It's kind of ridiculous, really... I think you would get a kick out of some of the newer games. There's one coming out called ***Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain****, where you're a vampire, running around, and you've got these two swords, and when you walk up to somebody, and cut their throat, you see all the blood come from 'round your mouth, and then you see your guy wipe his mouth and go "Aaah..."*

GD: You know, I've got a bunch of Nintendo and Super Famicom games, and I just put my adapter in, and man, they're so much better than the American ones!

GF: Oh, I know, even the artwork... That's one of the biggest things we're blown away with; you see the American artwork, and you see the Japanese artwork, and there's so much detail in the Japanese artwork...

GD: In *Astro Boy*, to make him fly, first you have to make the jets and the boots go off, with different buttons, and then you direct him, and if you stop using the boots, he starts to fall slowly. So you can direct him to spots and then drop him wherever you want to drop him. And you keep the controller going, so he goes wherever you want him to go, while he drops. You can angle his drop, so he doesn't just drop straight down. It's awesome, and that's an old game, you know?

GF: You know, seeing ***Deoth Dealer*** *in a game would be sa cool..*

GD: If we do *Death Dealer*, I definitely want it to be something. Not as stiff as, like *Virtua Fighter*, but something in between what we have now, and that. Or something better than *Virtuo Fighter*.

GF: There's a game called ***Tekken****, I don't know if you're aware of it, but it's basically like taking* ***Virtua Fighter****, and just making the characters and movements much more fluid.*

GD: I saw it right before we were leaving last time. We were just there in, I think August... yeah, right after San Diego, I had about two days off, and I went right to Japan. So I saw that, and I played the *Vampire Hunter* game. Have you seen that?

GF: Yeah, Capcom's ***Vompire Hunter****...*

GD: Yeah, it's awesome. It's in the arcades in Japan, and I'm sure they have it for the home games, too, now.

GF: Here in America, it's coming out pretty soon.

GD: Yeah, when I'm there next time, actually, I've got Rick, who's in charge of all the Japanese stuff. He's going over there; I'm going to give him the money to get me the game *Vampire Hunter*.

GF: That game came out in Japan, and was a huge hit. That game over here didn't seem to generate much interest at all.

GD: Well, the characters were really good comic characters over there, way before the game came out.

GF: Yeah, they just came out with a line of ***Vampire Hunter: Night Warriors*** *toys that're just intense.*

GD: Where, here?

GF: Na, in Japan. They are so cool. You know that one character, Donovan, with the big Tibetan blade?

GD: Yeah.

GF: Yeah, they have scale models, preassembled and already painted...

GD: Oh, you mean models, not toys.

GF: Well, they're kind of garage kits...

GD: Yeah, yeah, I have Morrigan, and a few others. I thought you meant toys. These are resin kits. Yeah, I have a ton of those. And they have super-D's with all the characters.

GF: Yeah. Going back a bit, I really liked the ***Satanika*** *super-D's*

GD: Yeah, *Satanika* and Dalkiel. We just got back the *Igrat* and the Inquisitor one from the *Satanika* series. And we're doing a *Devilman*. Then, right after the *Devilman* super-D is the *Sirene* super-D, because we're having *Satanika* fight *Sirene* in the first Japanese/American crossover. It might end up as animation. The first animation we're doing is *Satanika*, then we're doing Igrat, and we're trying to make it possible so that Eric Canete can do the art. He's the *Aeon Flux* artist.

GF: Yeah, I thought it was great that you guys got him.

GD: He's got a new story in the new *Verotika* that just came out this week, *Verotika 6*. At the office we just got our copies today. But, he does the Igrat mini-series, and we're going to try and make it so that he directs it; he's at least doing the storyboards, so it'll look like the *Igrat* mini-series. It'll be wild.



GF: When you go about developing a character, how much of your original ideas make it to the comics?

GD: All of them.

GF: All of them? Everything?

GD: Yeah. Everything... It's my company. I don't have to run it by anybody. What I do is I make sure it all works, and then it goes on from there. So, in *Satanika 2*, we launched her book after the three issue mini-series. In issue 2, she finally had sex. Her whole body freaks out, she grows extra boobs, her eyes start glowing, she just freaks out. But, we just do whatever we think makes sense. So that's what we do. The only things we don't do; we don't do any child pornography kind of stuff, or animal stuff, we're just not into that.

GF: I've been into comics since I was a kid, and I've collected everything,



but this is the first time that the old excitement is back.
GD: We get a lot of letters like that, and we always appreciate hearing it, because that's why we do it. I'm excited about it. It's really a drag when we have all these older comics people kind of freakin' on us, you know. It's like, you know what? We're not part of your comics world. We never were and we never will be. We're not about what you're about. Don't lump us in with you; we're something totally different. If we wanted to be like you, we would be, but we don't want to be, so just leave us the f*** alone.
GF: What sort of comics are you into?
GD: It depends. I like *Witchblade*, which is pretty wild. I think the Top Cow studios is probably the best studio... That's just my opinion, right now. That's about it; not much else... I can't say I buy a regular title. If I see something here I like, or if I see an artist that I want to try and get to work for us, or a colorist... That's the only other reason I buy books, you know?
GF: I know you have a great admiration for Frazetta and his work. Are there other artists, musical or otherwise, who have made a similar impact in your life?
GD: Well, in music, of course, there's tons. Uhh, let me see who made a big impact on me... Black Sabbath, of course, the first band I ever saw, you know, of course, with Ozzy, Elvis Presley, seeing "Jailhouse Rock" was pretty wild, Jim Morrison, a couple of records by the Doors, old blues, Howlin' Wolf, and lately, I've been listening to stuff like Lords Of Acid, Nine Inch Nails, Ministry...
GF: I've heard that you were interested in doing a sequel to ***Black Aria****, as a sort of soundtrack to the* ***Death Dealer****.*
GD: Yeah, I'm already doing work on it. We might do that as a film, a movie. We've been talking to a lot of Hollywood studios out here about doing it. Frank really wants to be involved with it... It'll probably be a PG-13 movie. It'll be violent, but there's not much sex in *Death Dealer*, anyway. There'll be a lot of supernatural stuff, but for the most part, it'll just be violent. Then, there's talk about doing *Jaguor God* as a movie, which would be awesome. Actually it was talked about as a video game.
GF: You write many of the Verotik books yourself. Was this your first experience writing comics, or is it something you've done before?
GD: Actually, when I was a little kid, like I said, I wanted to be a comic artist. But I've been writing stories and stuff for a long time, and then of course, I've been a songwriter. I've been writing movie scripts for about five years.
GF: I've heard that you do a great deal of the original designs, character drawings, and even some of the color guides yourself. Do you have any plans to include your work in any of the books?
GD: I don't know, I mean, I just did a drawing of Dalkiel, and Steven wants me to use it as a trading card.
GF: I think your fans would freak out if you did that. I'm a pretty big fan, and I would dig seeing that.
GD: Actually, I never draw myself, but I did a caricature of myself on the bus once, and I showed to Eerie (Von, Danzig's ex-bassist), and he started laughing; he said "It looks just like you!" It's pretty funny, so I might put it in my next editorial.
GF: Tell me a little about your newer projects, like ***Goth****, and* ***Igrat****. I've heard you've got Liam Sharpe doing the artwork on* ***Goth****, and I know* ***Igrat*** *was done by Eric Canete.*
GD: Yeah, Liam Sharpe is doing *Goth*. The first issue comes out, I think, in a few weeks. We're doing an actual Go Nagai gallery, where all the artists are going to do their favorite Go Nagai character. He's got so many characters. Liam did a *Devilman* that's awesome. So *Goth* is some government scientific experiment that goes crazy, and then they try to cover it up. *Igrat* is, or course, the mini-series, that tells you how she becomes the assassin. It's based on biblical stuff, just like *Satoniko*...

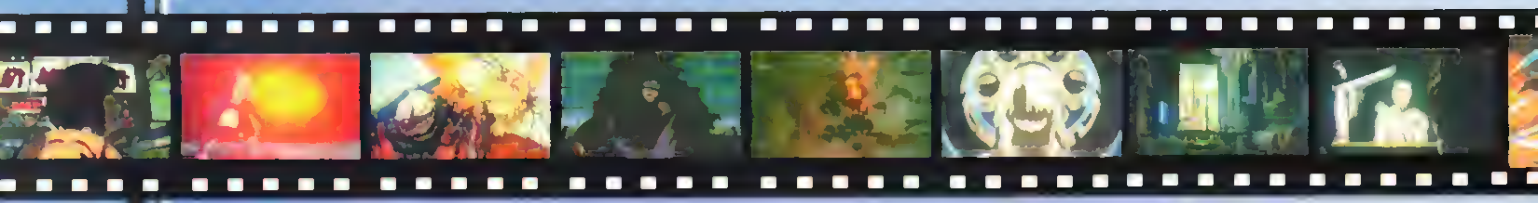


GF: When I was down at Verotik, Steve showed me a page from, I think it was ***Igrat****, where at the end, she takes on Jesus Christ.*
GD: One of her first assassinations is Jesus. What happens is it ties in with the Spear of Destiny myth. So, basically, in the end of *Igrat* number one, Dalkiel hands her the spear, with all this armor he's given her. It turns out it's the Spear of Destiny. What happens is, because of all this armor she's wearing, when she goes to kill Jesus, and he's already on the cross, they all think she's a Roman soldier. She puts him out of his misery, actually. It goes back to the whole myth of Jesus, that this Roman soldier stabbed him in the side so he would die, because he felt sorry for him. You know, not let him hang there nailed to a cross in misery for days and days on end. So it's *Igrat*, actually, and they think that it's this Roman soldier. It should freak a lot of people out. It's just another take on a mythology story, you know.
GF: What would you say to those "conservatives" who view your work as, uh, too dark, too morbid, or too grim?
GD: You know, I don't screw with them, and they shouldn't screw with me. If this wasn't America, then maybe we'd have to move somewhere else, but this is America. I have my rights, you have yours, leave me alone. We don't solicit our books as all ages, we solicit them as mature and adults only. It's not like little kids can go in and buy our books. Usually, whenever they do this, it means that somebody's running for office, or somebody's trying to get famous. Somebody's trying to use you to go somewhere else. So, you've got to take it with a grain of salt...





My personal thanks to Glenn Danzig, Steven Wordlaw, and Ruthie Smith-Barlaw at Veratik, and special thanks to Bill Liebowitz and staff at Golden Apple, Los Angeles.



TAKUHI'S

ANIME FAN

GHOST IN THE SHELL

In the last 2 or 3 years, anime fans have seen the amount of anime video tapes released each month increase from a trickle to a flood. Oddly enough, however, there's been almost no increase in the amount of anime that goes straight to theaters. In fact, I can't think of a major anime theatrical release since *Wings of Honneamise*, which was like 8 months ago. And what was the last one before that?

Well, starting in January, we'll be lucky enough to witness what could possibly be the biggest anime theatrical release since *Akira*... *Ghost in the Shell*. Of course, when we say "major" in terms of anime, we're talking about as little as 20 screens nationwide (Manga has yet to announce the extent of the release, so people who don't live in or near a big city shouldn't lose hope yet). Still, if you haven't actually seen one on the big screen, you can't know what you're missing.

With stunning animation, a rocking soundtrack, and a mass appeal sci-fi storyline based on the comic series by Masamune Shirow (who also brought us *Appleseed*, *Black Magic M-66*, and *Dominion*), *Ghost in the Shell* is definitely a film that deserves the big screen treatment. Produced by the folks who brought us *Akira*, and directed by basically the same team responsible for the *Patlabor* movies, *Ghost in the Shell* is in competent hands. As a further sign of the growing influence of Western fans in the anime world, Manga is actually a co-producer in the project, insuring timely releases for *Ghost in the Shell*'s theatrical and video releases.



The year is 2029, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has covertly created a virtual lifeform to do its bidding on the world's data networks. The problem comes when this physically formless agent, called the "Puppet Master," decides that he truly is alive, and requests political asylum from his creators. Now he's caught in an internal struggle between two political agencies who want to either suppress or free him.

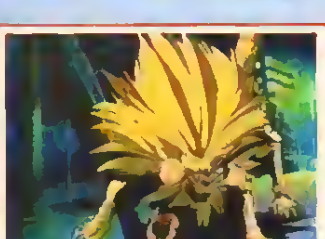
Enter frequently-topless cyborg Motoko Kusanagi, who's assigned to stop him, but is able to sympathize with his desires. He proposes they merge themselves, and she... Well, like I know what happens. The movie's only ever been shown in its entirety twice, once in Japan and once in Europe. Like the rest of you, I'll have to wait 'till January to see it on the big screen. Provided they use real voice actors other than the half-asleep ones on the demo tape, *Ghost in the Shell* could be the anime event of 1996.



INTERNATIONAL

真・女神転生
SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI

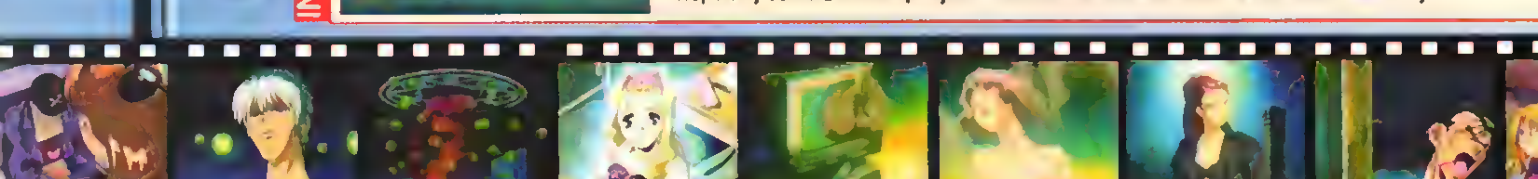


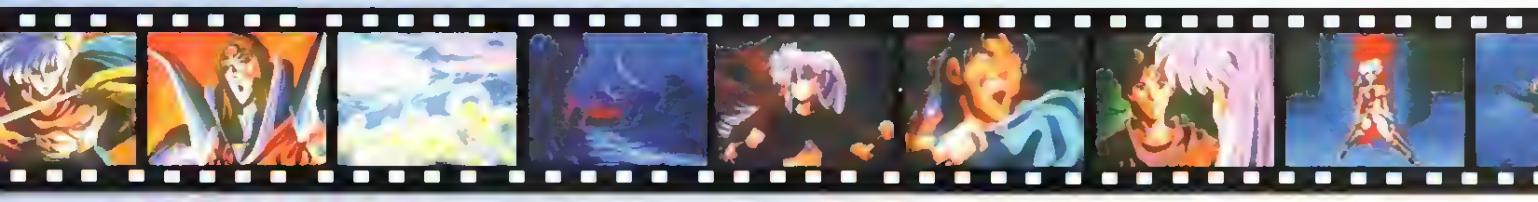


While fighting game conversions seem to invariably end in failure, RPG-based anime continues to be among the industry's best. Atlus' flagship *Megami Tensei*, which is sort of a high-tech, demonic *Wizardry*, is one of those game series that are huge in Japan (there's a new release every week, it seems) but never even mentioned here. The newest game in the series, *Devil Summoner*, is due for the Saturn on Christmas Day.

The animation for the two 29 minute OAV episodes is excellent, and the character design is very cool, done by that one sorta-famous guy whose name I don't remember. The villain, Kobayashi, was particularly well done. He's just your average angst-ridden teenager who got beat up a lot as a kid, and learned how to retaliate by summoning demons through his personal computer.

Hopefully some bold company will take a chance and release this one domestically.







Satoshi Urushibara and Kinji Yoshimoto need therapy. Badly. Not that they're not geniusas, of coursa, I've always baen a huga Satoshi Urushibara ten... Ha's tha guy who did the incradibla charactar designs tor tha *Langrissa* series of strategy games (ahem, note the placemant of Elwin's hand on tha *Dar Langrissa* cover art), and thare's a baautitul original *Streat Fighter II* poster he did on my wall. But - both togalher with Kinji Yoshimoto (who's mora tamous tor his soft porn ettorts) and alona - he has some sarious talishes I don't even want to talk aboul.

Thair most tamous collaboration was this year's *Ptastic Littla* (released hera courtesy of AD Vision) an axcallant bit ot anima which had a 2 hour plot crammad into 45 minutas ot anima, about halt of which were used tor lingering breast shots. Well, it's good to know that they're getting battar, as thair 1989 collaboralion, *Lamnaar*, was almost *constant* bara braasts, mixad in with a tairly generic tantasy storylina.

Lemnear is finally getting released hara, via U.S. Manga Corps, and it's cartainly worth a rent. Tha plot is paintully ganeric and quite pradictabla, but Urushibara's axcallant (if constantly suggastive) art, and a vary cool hard rock soundtrack (no vocals, thankfully) make it worth a rent.

Ralaasad by U.S. Manga Corps, 49 minutes, parental guidance definitely suggastad.



Virtua Fighter





If avar you tind yourself in Japan on a Monday night, tind yourselt a TV. At 6:00, start your evaning oft with *ZENKI*. At 6:30, it's time tor *Virtua Fighter*. At 7, it's *Street Fighter tIV*, and at 7:30, *Magic Knight Rayaarth*. Yes, this is tha charmed lite Japan-basad anima tans laad, avary day ot avary waak ot every STINKING YEAR. Not thal t'm bittar.

Okay, I am bitter, but after finally saeing *Virtua Fighter*, much of the sting is gone. I don't want to say that it's bad, but... wall... man, is it evar *bad*! If you've avar sean the Japanasa *Streat Fighlar* TV sarias, you know what to expect. In tact, you know *axactly* what to expect. I wouldn't be surprised it they just dug the scripts tor tha tirst two apisodes out ot Capcom's dumpstar, and just replaced "Ryu" and "Chun Li" with "Akira" and "Pai" inslaad.

Exactly as with *Streat Fighlar*, our proud, stoic Akira has baen raducad to a boy-am-I-ever-cool taanagar who spands 90% ot his tima aating, but always has his gi and headband from the game underneath whatever he's waaring.

In the tirst episoda, Pai is flaaing from tha evil crime lord she was arranged to marry, and Akira agrees to help har out in exchange tor waiving the debt on 10,000 platefuls of his favorita tood, gyoza. The wacky thing is, Pai hatas gyoza! This is one of the series' many, um... "wacky" running gags. Ha ha.

Episodes 3 and 4 introduca Sarah (raduced from a cold, hardened, brainwashed killer into a mindlass slut with a tlying squirrel named Alexander on har shoulder) and "Smile Steeks"-sponsored racing star Jackia. Those four, plus yet to debut Kaga, will torm tha series' main characters, although averyone from tha sarias will appaar in it eventually.

Though it's only the fourth episoda, I was disappointed by the cliché-tilled diraction chosen tor *Virtua Fighter*, and the animation quality is pratty poor, especially considaring tha quality ot earliar Studio Piro works (most notably *Yuyu Hakusho*). Ah well, lal's hope the upcoming *Tekkan* anime can reverse the recant trend of bad fighting game to anime conversions.

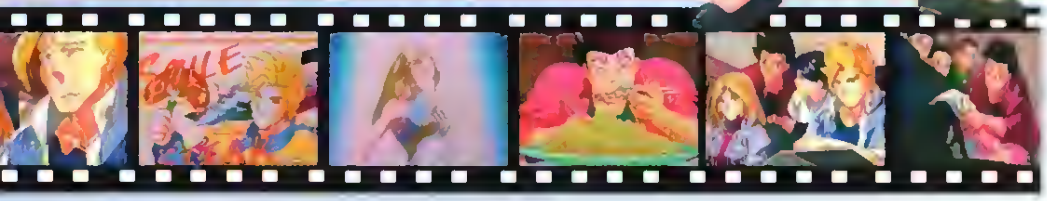


Before we go, there are a couple of exciting anime/game developments on the way.

As i said earlier, *Tekkon*'s the next fighting game oe the way, uelesa yoe count thet eet-so-hot Neo*Geo fighter, *Gowkaizer*. At leest it features art by Masaki Ohbari, who did the character desigee for the pretty good *Fatal Fury* movie.

Qeovadis is ee anime-fiiied strategy game comieg for the Saturn oe December 21et, with character deeigns by Haruhiiko Mikimoto, most famoue for hie excellent work le *Macross II*. *Quovadis* ie also a weekly radio drame eow, eed eooe to be e featura leegth eeime of some sort...

Sony's sprung for 15 minetes of high qeality enimetion for the opeeing end ending of their new *Beldeeolva* fiight simelator/RPG, due ie February. Character designs era by Yeteke izubechi, bet to perfectly honest, I have eo idee who he is. Must be pretty famoue though.



HANDS ON
PORTABLES

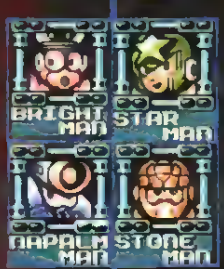
REVIEW

SEGA GAMEGEAR

DEVELOPER - US GOLD
PUBLISHER - US GOLD
FORMAT - 4 MEG CART.
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - NOW

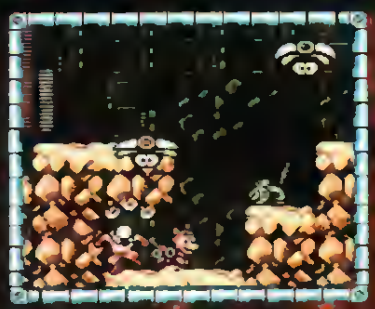


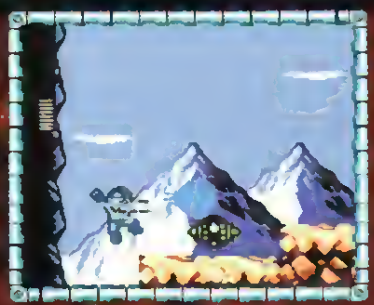
NICK ROX
PERHAPS THE LAST GREAT GG GAME.











MEGA MAN

The Game Geer *MegaMan* takes two bossos each from *MegaMan* 4 end 5: BrightMan, StoneMan, StarMen, and NapalmMan, complete with their stages end weepons. While this does remove quite a bit of strategy in selecting the right weapon for the right boss, it must be remembered thet this is e Game Geer game we're talking about. In retrospect, however, *MegaMan* 4 end 5 were both 4 megs oech, and that's just what this GG cart is. Odd.

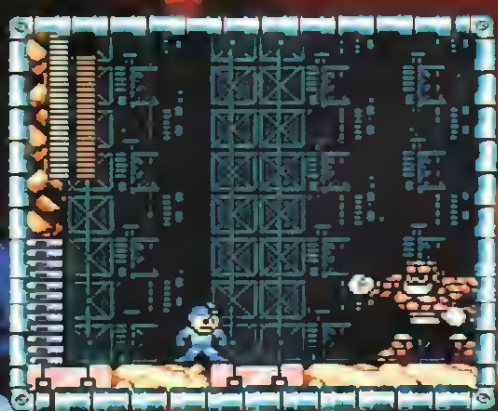
Tho gamepley is total *MegaMan*, with the charge-up Mega Buster, sliding, and even trusty Rush. Tho only thing Rush cen do for you is spring you to high platforms, but hey... at least he's in there! For you poor, poor souls who've never played *MegaMan*, the entire game is based around defeating verious robots, gaining their weapons, and then defeating other robots with the new weapons. It wes up to you to find out which weapons did the most damage to which enemy... there was immense strategy in whet ordor you pleyed the game's levels in. This strategic planning is mightily reduced by having only four boss enemies, but it's still there in some form.

MM's graphics and music echo the NES perfectly. *MegaMan* is slightly bigger in relation to his surroundings then the originel versions, but this is for the GG's miniature display. Other than this minor difference, everything you see - *MegaMan*, backgrounds, enemies, and weapons - is lifted directly from the NES game. The music, too, is 8-bit exactness, with that burning Capcom composition.

It you still whip out the ol' GG from time to time, I highly recommend *MegaMan*. It's as fun as it ever was, and being able to go anywhere and play such a classic game of joy is extremely cool. I still think this geme should have come out eons ego... -Nick Rox

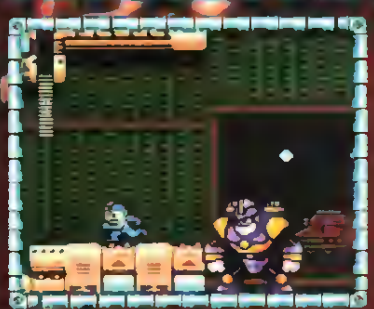












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FINALLY...

This is the issue that everyone has been waiting for, with the unveiling of Nintendo's Ultra 64 (Nintendo 64 in Japan) resting comfortably on page 130. I'm actually writing this on 11/17, a full week before The Show of the Decade. Before we dig in, I want to remind everyone that we've been saying the Ultra is the most advanced video game architecture from day one, while the other mags wavered. For 3 years, I've been talking to 3rd party developers, publishers, game editors from other magazines, programmers, designers, and, most importantly, fellow colleagues at work. Few believed that Nintendo could pull it off. Now that it's a reality, the other guys are jumping on the Nintendo train head first, like they spent the last three years believing. They'd have you think they were first, but good, bad, or otherwise, I've been spewing out Ultra news for as long as I can remember, driving the Editor-in-Chief wacko and running up phone bills.

Killer 2, Part Deux...

The big news from last month regarding the *Killer Instinct* upgrade has changed a little. The upgrade will actually be *Killer Instinct 2*, and will hit the arcades January '96. Test versions should start hitting around December. Right about now you're thinking "What happened? You said KI2 wasn't going to be released in the arcade, but as a home exclusive!" Basically, Nintendo changed the game plan, and, uh, well, hey, I just call 'em like I see 'em (or hear 'em). If I'm right half the time, we're smokin'. This is after all, a gossip column... Not! I really try to get you the best info available and have some high powered sources.

The home version of KI2 may feature major upgrades not found in the arcade version, such as extra moves, tricks, backgrounds, better graphics and extra characters.

In other Ultra news, *Mario RPG* for Ultra is said to be currently in development. Programming won't start until January 1996, due to the fact that the Square team, who did the Super famicom game, won't be back from their vacation until January. Square sends their teams on dreamy vacations between projects to dream up more power. It seems to work! Soon after, programming will begin and a 1997 release is planned.

MK4, Could It Be True?

Yes, you've read correctly. MK 4 is coming late next year and will finally be in real-time 3-D. MK4 will use Computer Graphics similar to *Killer Instinct*'s. While nothing is concrete, my sources suggest that the PlayStation could be the first recipient of a home conversion. While we're on the subject of MK, *Ultimate MK3* is scheduled for both the 3DO and PlayStation. Previous reports suggested that Nintendo would have it exclusively, but recent Nintendo/Williams negotiations must have broken down due to Nintendo's exclusivity clause. As it stands there are no plans for MK of any kind on the Ultra.

VF3, Daytona 2...

In Sega news this month we start off with some *Virtua Fighter 3* info. The game that will surely set the standard for 3-D fighting games in 1996 is close to completion. VF3 will feature real-time computer graphics, like in Sega's recent VF2 portrait collections for Saturn, all in real-time 3-D. Look for it to hit the arcades sometime in the 1st quarter of '96 in Japan, with a 2nd or 3rd quarter release here in America. The Saturn version is actually being worked on simultaneously. VF3 is scheduled for release on the Saturn in time for Christmas '96. Question is, how will AM2 port a 64-bit arcade game on to the SS? I wish I know. Perhaps an upgrade is in the works. Hey, maybe it's the RU-64 rocket pep!!

Matsushita And Sega, Still Talking?

Rumors are still circulating insinuating the M2 hardware still might be licensed for use in future Sega arcade games. Matsushita won't confirm the rumor, but sources at Sega of Japan say negotiations are still under way.

Saturn Sonic... There Is Hope

The sequel that everyone has been waiting for is almost certainly a reality. The game is rumored to be about 30% complete, being programmed by Sega of Japan. Sources say Sonic will make his debut for the Saturn at next year's E3 in Los Angeles and should be released by Fall '96. In last month's Other Stuff, I reported that *Daytona Romix* was in development for the Saturn. What I failed to mention is that a sequel is also planned for arcade release in the winter of '96, and the Saturn sometime in the 1st quarter of '97 (after Sega's *Indy 500*). Also in the works from Sega for the Saturn is a new *Star Wars* game and a new fighting game from the same team that brought us *Eternal Champions*.

Street Fighter 3 Coming Soon?

Reliable sources have verified that SF3 could start testing as soon as April '96 in Osaka, Japan. In America, testing should start sometime next summer with a release shortly thereafter. This time around the competition will be fierce. Will Capcom once again revolutionize the fighting category? I'm diggin' for info's like a golfer on steroids...

PlayStation X 4?

A new version of the PlayStation hardware is rumored to be in development, scheduled for release in the summer of '96 in Japan with a price tag of only 25,000 yen (about $259).

This system, touted as the PlayStation Type-C, would feature all of the PlayStation hardware better integrated, creating a smaller, easier to manufacture board. The CD-ROM would be 4X speed, (current PlayStations are 2X) which could cause Sony to reprogram a few of their existing titles for the new system. Both systems would, of course, be fully compatible otherwise.

See ya' next month!



PANZER DRAGOON II ZWEI - THESE SHOTS WERE SO ULTRA LAST MINUTE I'M LEFT WITH ONLY TWO LINES FOR WHICH TO CONVEY ITS SPLENDOR. IT PICKS UP WHERE I LEFT OFF AND IS SHOCKINGLY EVEN MORE INNOVATIVE THAN THE ORIGINAL. WE'LL HAVE THE WHOLE STORY NEXT MONTH.

Games



SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE FRIEND...

The character that started it all will make his fourth 16-bit appearance this January 27th in Japan in Square/Nintendo's incredible 32-meg SGI *Super Mario RPG*. The Super Famicom will continue to receive ample support in Japan throughout '96 with *Kid Kirby*, *Furai No Shiren*, *Far East of Eden Zero*, *DKC3*, *Front Mission*, *Gun Hazard*, Square's newly announced *Bahamut Lagoon*, and many more. Recently, *Secret of Mana 3*, *Y's 5*, *Tengi-Makyo Zero*, and *Dragon Quest 6* all came out in Japan and are all top quality games, albeit a bit difficult to decipher in Japanese. 16-bit collectors may consider a closer look as these titles, especially *Mana 3* and *Y's 5* (both are action/role playing) as they are not slated for US release. The *Mario RPG*, *Kid Kirby*, and *DKC3* however, will all appear in the US next year.

MORE M2 FOR YOU

Warp's D2 is well underway but is currently the only game in development for Matsushita's M2 in Japan. To be released in Japan, Europe, and the US next year, the M2's price, availability, and hardware configuration, are still under lock and key. Will the only system on par with the U-64 gain enough support to compete at the top? Price will be a major factor for those who currently do not possess a 3DO. An add-on unit will be available for 3DO users which should be competitively priced. Sources close to the project say the M2 out-performs the Ultra. However, there's more to a successful platform than pure power. Nintendo has the support of some of the worlds top developers and a firm grip on Japan's best designers. Unlike the 3DO, the M2 will need major licenses and a low price to compete at the Ultra's level. Third parties currently on board in the US include Acclaim, Interplay, and EA... a healthy start. Regardless, the stage is set. I just pray they pack in a decent control pad.

FREQUENT FLIERS...

Atlus, a company showing great business prowess by picking up *Space Griffon* for the PlayStation, and *High Velocity* and *Virtual Hydlide* for the Saturn, all from Japan, have made their best move yet. They've acquired *Steamgear Mash*, the insanely fun iso-action game from Takara Japan, for the Saturn. With minimal translation required, SGM should make Christmas.



ZERO DIVIDE TO TWI

Time Warner, another company with a good eye for quality product from overseas has pulled off a shocker by acquiring Zoom's amazing polygon fighter, *Zero Divide*, a game we thought SCEA would surely grab. ZD should be in stores by the time you read this.



SONY MAKES FIRST MOVE

Speaking of Sony (America), they too have made a brilliant move. SCEA will release both *Arc the Lad* and *Beyond The Beyond*, two blazin' RPG's, in the States early in the new year. How funny that Sega has two brill action RPG's of their own (*Shining Wisdom* and *RayEarth*) enjoying massive popularity in Japan that they have no plans to release here. Looks like Sony will be the company to work closely with their Japanese affiliates and read the trades. We've been begging for RPG's since the word Saturn was first uffered. It tell on deat ears at Sega. Sony's radar must have picked up our transmission.

WAKE UP SEGA!

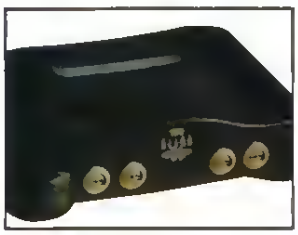
In a related story, reports from Japan say that Sega Japan is asking that Sega US take another look at both *Shining Wisdom* and *RayEarth*. Sega US passed on both titles based on very early versions. They can borrow mine... Stay tuned.

PANZER DRAGOON... 2!

On a positive note, sources at SOA have intormed us that a *Panzer Dragoon* sequel is in the works with a release planned tor 1st O. '96. *Panzer 2* will teature levels where you ride on the ground (similar to part one's intro.). Your dragon actually grows with you in part 2, maturing as you progress. Perhaps you meet up with a baby dragon, teach it to tly, etc.... Look for shots on *Panzer 2* as early as next month. Many of our staff are currently headed for Japan tor both the Shoshinkai and the Saturn one year anniversary which is being held at Sega's Amusement World.

THERE'S A BUG GDING AROUND

While we're talking sequels, here's some great news (it you're a *Bug!* tan). And who's not? *Bug 2* is already in the works! Liffle is known about this sequel other than it is in the early stages ot development. We presume that *Bug!* is Sega of America's new mascot, having ditched *Sonic* (a move I personally view as a tatal mistake) and given the great response to *Bug!* tt's a no-brainer. *Bug!* is a great character, and *Sonic* has been damaged by the hyper lame American cartoon of ultimate cheapness, but still, he's a staple in gaming, or at least he used to be. Perhaps Sega of Japan will give *Sonic* another whirl.



LUCASARTS TO CREATE NEW *STAR WARS* STORY FOR NINTENDO'S ULTRA 64

Redmond, WA - Nintendo ol America, Inc. and LucasArts Entertainment Company will be bringing a never-been-told *Star Wars* story to the Nintendo Ultra 64 by mid 1996. *Shadows of the Empire* will take place between *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. Howard Lincoln, chairman of NOA claims, "Combining this amazing original *Star Wars* story with the Nintendo Ultra 64 system will give players everything they've hoped tor in video game play. In addition to real time 3-O on the screen, players will have full freedom ot movement and be able to control the action throughout the game. It's very, very real."

MATSUSHITA BUYS M2

Osaka, Japan - Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd will purchase exclusive rights to the M2 technology and its operating system technology trom the 3DO Company tor $1D0 million plus any additional royalties. Matsushita plans to develop a 64-bit next generation system as well as using the technology tor commercial arcade games and computer hardware and soffware. Plans are to release a CD-ROM based system by mid 1996.

People

RICHIE SAMBDRA TO DO EXCLUSIVE SDUNDTRACK FOR JOHNNY BAZOOKATDNE

San Francisco, CA - Bon Jovi's Richie Sambora will be releasing his exclusive hit *Mr. Sambo* on U.S. Gold's *Johnny Bazookatone* game. The game will be available on the Saturn, PlayStation, and PC-CO/ROM in January ot 1996.

NEW FACES & NEW PLACES

Virgin Interactive Entertainment:

Jeanine Gaylord-Mouchawar (tormerly of Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment) is now Senior Product Manager.

Kris Kraves (tormerly ot Ocean ot America) is now Oirector of Publicity.

Konami (America), Inc.:

Robert O'Conner is now Divisional Vice President of Sales.

Acclaim Entertainment, Inc.:

James Oerose, Jr. is now President of Acclaim Interactive Software.

The 3DO Company:

Hugh Martin (former Chief Operating Officer) has been promoted to President.

Paul Milley (tormer VP of Finance) has been promoted to Chief Financial Officer.

Steve Fowler (former VP ot Developer and Customer Service) is now the Vice President, Operations and Service, Studio 300.

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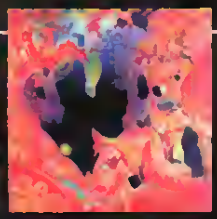
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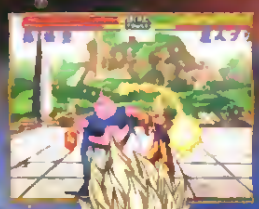
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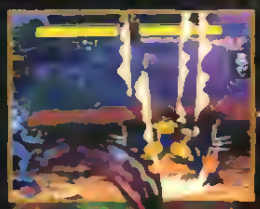


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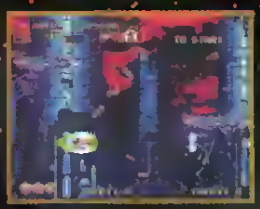
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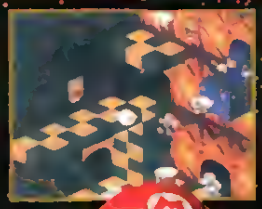
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Mystery Word Grid

	H				
		E			
P	I	N	C	H	W
	R				
S					

MYSTERY WORD

WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

PINCH W	PRESS.....K	BLAST A	WRECK D
BREAK Z	PUNCH S	SPRAY C	TURBO.....V
STOMP T	STAND.....R	PRESS E	DREAM....O
CRUSH.....I	SCORE H	SLANT L	CHASE.....P

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ACCLAIM	5. 57
BRE SOFTWARE	145
CHIPS & BITS	86-87
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS	2-3, 13, 37. 60-61, 110-111
DIEHARD GAMERS CLUB	142-143
DIEHARD MARKETING	144
FATBOY VIDEO	147
GAMEWARE EXPRESS	148
JAPANIMANIACS	137
KONAMI	53, 114-115
MASCO ENTERTAINMENT	151
NINTENDO OF AMERICA	10-11
PANASONIC	25, 27
PANDEMONIUM	146
PLANET GAMES	150
PLAYMATES	9, 17, 21
SEGA OF AMERICA	23, 109
SONY	6-7, 14-15
SONY INTERACTIVE	33, 41, 44-45, 51
STD	77
TIME WARNER INTERACTIVE	152
UBI SOFT INC.	79
UNIVERSAL FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT	19
UNIVERSE VIDEO GAMES	145
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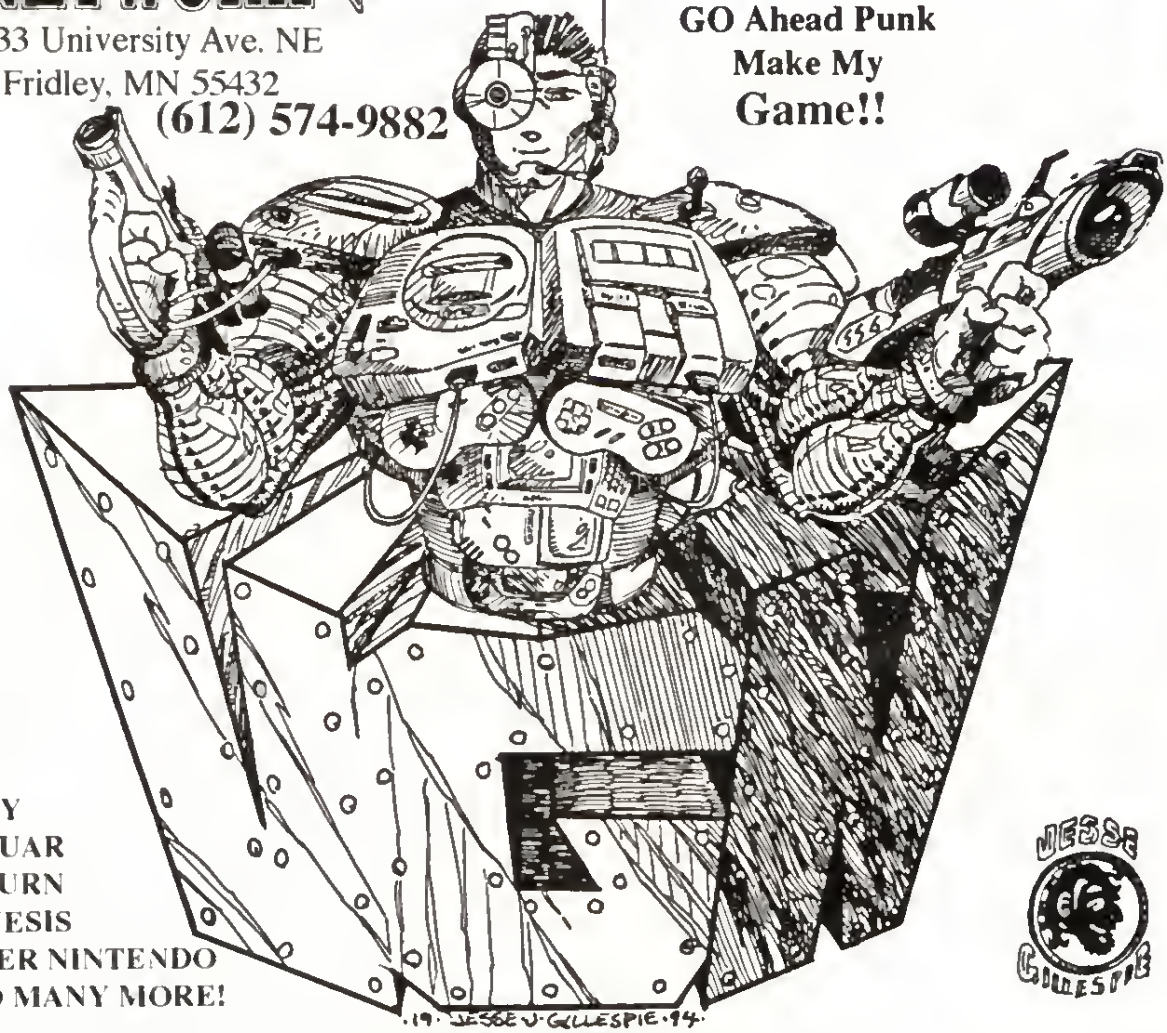
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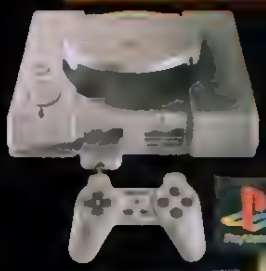
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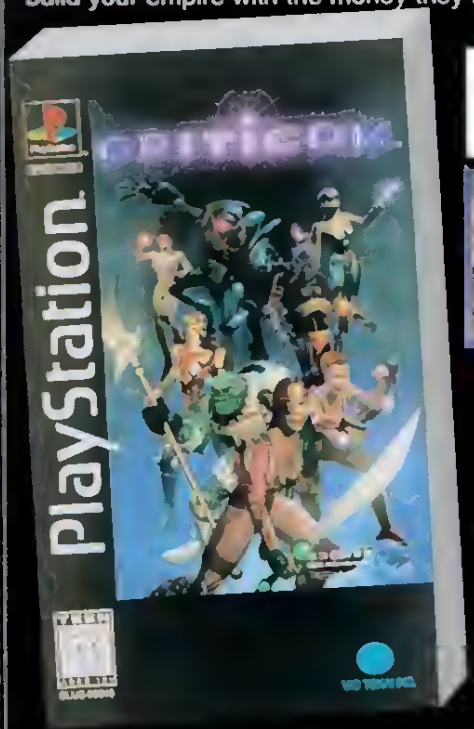
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